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DRAMAS,

By SIR JAMES BLAND BURGESS, Bart.

13201

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

CONTAINING

THE KNIGHT OF RHODES,
THE ADVERTISEMENT,
THE BANDIT,
TRICKS UPON TRAVELLERS.

London:

Printed for EDWARD KERBY, Bookseller, &c.

Stafford Street, Bond Street.

28 - 1817.

TO THE READER.

Of the Dramas contained in these volumes, two, namely, **RICHES**, and **TRICKS UPON TRAVELLERS**, have been acted, and only the former of these was published. The terms of Mr. Arnold's licence being restricted to the performance of Operas at the Lyceum Theatre, the author found himself under the necessity of introducing into his comedy of **TRICKS UPON TRAVELLERS** the prescribed number of songs; but as they did not please himself, he was apprehensive they might not, when stript of their musical accompaniments, prove more satisfactory to others: he therefore declined the immediate publication of the piece, and he now brings it forward as it was originally written.

The six remaining Dramas are entirely new, and as such are submitted to the indulgence of the Public.

THE END OF THE ROAD

by J. H. M. J. J.

THE END OF THE ROAD

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THE END OF THE ROAD

THE END OF THE ROAD

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THE END OF THE ROAD

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THE
KNIGHT OF RHODES.

A TRAGEDY.

Periculosa plenum opus aleæ
Tractas: et incedis per ignes
Suppositos cineri doloso.

HORACE,

VOL. I.

B

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

VILLIERS,Grand-Master of Rhôdes.

DAMARAL,	}	Knights.
ALMEIDA,		
DAVILA,		
RAYMOND,		
GARCIAS,		
DU MESNIL,		

HALI,A Turkish Captive.

OMAR,Envoy from the Turkish General.

ISMENA,A Turkish Captive.

Scene—Rhodes.

Time—During the Siege of Rhodes, by Mustapha, General of Soliman II, in the year 1521.

THE
KNIGHT OF RHODES.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A public Place in Rhodes.

Enter a Mob, some crying "a Villiers," others "a Damaral." To them enter Garcias.

GARCIAS.

WHAT mean these clamours? Wherefore throng ye thus,
When proclamation has been made that all
Should keep good order, and not bar the way
Through which, when past th'election, our Grand-Master
Must with his noble cavalcade proceed?
Hence! and take heed to observe strict discipline.

B 2

[*Exit Mob.*]

Enter Raymond.

Raymond! What tidings?

RAYMOND.

All hath ended rightly.

Though still beleaguer'd closely by the Turk,
Our Order still though menac'd with destruction,
We now may confidently 'wait the issue.
Th'election falls on Villiers.

GARCIAS.

Heav'n be thank'd!

He is a gallant and a courteous knight,
Whose valour and experience yet may save us.
But say, good Raymond, how did his opponent,
The haughty Damaral, bear his disappointment?

RAYMOND.

As such a spirit, so untamable,
So fill'd with high and arrogant pretensions,
Might bear th'extinction of his cherish'd hope.
Soon as the herald had announc'd the name
Of Villiers as the sov'reign of our Order,
He cast a look of stern disdain around,
And, while our knights proceeded to enthrone
And swear allegiance to our new Grand-Master,
He proudly turn'd away, and left the temple.

(A trumpet sounds.)

But hark ! We must be gone—that trumpet's voice
Warns us 'tis time to join the grand procession,
Which to his palace must escort the prince.
Let us away—we have no time to lose.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Damaral and Almeida.

DAMARAL.

Talk not to me of patience ! Try no more
To sooth by argument my spirit wounded
Past all endurance !—Am I thus repaid
For all my services ?—Ungrateful Rhodes !
Have I, when others wanton'd in the lap
Of idle peace, for thee, untir'd, sustain'd
War's harsh aggression ; have I, undismay'd,
Dar'd the rude ocean when the tempest rag'd,
And, reckless of my life, led on our host
To fame and vict'ry, to be slighted thus ?

ALMEIDA.

Well hast thou prov'd thyself a worthy knight :
Yet, when the choice could fall on one alone—

DAMARAL.

And why not I that one ?—Look to our archives,
Say, if among our Order's bravest champions
There stand a name than Damaral's more renown'd ?
Ask the proud Turks who e'er like him could face them ?

They will do justice to my high deserts,
Which those who profit by them have forgotten.

ALMEIDA.

No, Damaral ! no ; they ne'er can be forgotten.
We, who have witness'd all thy brave exploits,
Do ample justice—

DAMARAL.

Yes ! You pass me by,
You treat me with neglect, degrade me lower
Than him whom court intrigues, not warlike service,
Have dragg'd to notice. Yet you talk of justice !

ALMEIDA.

Though upon Villiers th'election fall—

DAMARAL.

On Villiers !—him !—As well may'st thou attempt
To tell me, that a weak and puling sea-boy
Can steer our gallies through th'Ægean gulf,
When the south wind tears up its foaming waves !

ALMEIDA.

Thou dost but wrong thyself and thy deserts,
Thus to inveigh against another's worth.
Think on the perils which encircle us :
The Turks with toil incessant urge the siege,
Each day they gain advantage over us,
While Europe's princes fail to send us succour.

A TRAGEDY.

7

DAMARAL.

Think on our perils? Little boots reflection,
When thus our means of safety are abandon'd.
Let those provide against them, who presume
In danger's hour our tott'ring state to guide.
I rule not here in Rhodes: one, doubtless far
More worthy of pre-eminence, is chosen,
Who can employ those arts my stubborn nature
Rejects with proud disdain. Let him see to it.

ALMEIDA.

This is no time for querulous complaint;
For nursing idle jealousies and feuds,
When danger presses and demands our swords.
But hark! The echoing trumpet's note proclaims
The installation of our chief is over,
And that in state, attended by his knights,
He this way comes.

DAMARAL.

Let him—I will not shun him—
I'll meet him here.

ALMEIDA.

Nay, prithee stand aside.
Leave him free passage.

DAMARAL.

Be it as thoud'st have it.
Now mark—behold—the proud procession comes.

(A martial symphony. Procession of Grand-Master and Knights, who file off on each side of the stage. Raymond and Davila advance. Damaral and Almeida stand aside.)

VILLIERS.

Thanks, brave companions! Since your favouring voices
Have thus exalted me beyond my hopes,
Far, far indeed beyond my wish!—For who,
When adverse fortune low'rs, would court pre-eminence?
My best ambition shall be to maintain
Your fair opinion, and deserve your sanction.

RAYMOND.

Had we not known thy worth, had not experience
Borne ample witness to thy zeal and honour,
We had not fix'd on thee. Many are brave,
Many are active, provident and wise;
But one so deck'd with all the qualities
Adapted to our present exigence,
As him on whom our Order's choice has fall'n,
We know not.

DAVILA.

Happy is indeed the choice,
And most in this, that, by selecting thee,
We 'scape the pride and tyranny of Damaral.

VILLIERS!

Good Davila, forbear! The knight you speak of

Is a renown'd and gallant gentleman,
In whom the virtues of our Order beam
With more than common lustre.

DAVILA.

Aye—he's valiant;
But rash, imperious, haughty—

DAMARAL (*advancing*).

Is it thus
Thou dar'st traduce an absent warrior's name?

VILLIERS.

Illustrious Damaral! Do not let the day,
Which our religion bids us reckon holy,
Be tarnish'd by dissention. He did ill
To derogate from thy establish'd fame.

DAMARAL.

For him, I heed but little what he says:
The censure or approval of a boy
Touch not my reputation—(*to Davila*)—murmur'st thou?

VILLIERS.

Cease—nor presume to urge this question farther.
Retire, young knight!—You, noble Damaral! Heed not
His hasty words. If, at the present moment,
I could repine at my unsought-for honours,
'Twould be that partial suffrages have deck'd me
With those distinctions which were more thy due.

DAMARAL.

That is a point we need not now discuss.—
Thou'rt chosen.

VILLIERS.

Credit me, we do thee justice.
We've all been witnesses of thy desert,
And speak no more than truth, when we confess
Our Order's safety, Rhodes's self, depend
On thy experienc'd worth. I've known thee long,
And would deserve thy friendship.

DAMARAL.

Friendship, say'st thou?

VILLIERS.

Did I respect thee less, I would not thus
Solicit thy regard. And why in vain—

DAMARAL.

'Twere better not to ask.—I cannot palter,
And chaffer civil speeches.—'Tis enough—

Enter Garcias (hastily).

GARCIAS.

Joy to our noble chieftain! May th'event
I come t'announce be a propitious omen!
Scarce had'st thou left the temple, when approaching
We saw Du Mesnil's galley, follow'd close
By a brave prize, from whose high topmast wav'd

Our Order's ensign, while, beneath, the crescent,
 In token of subjection, humbly droop'd.
 She seems a carrack of no mean account.
 E'en now triumphantly they reach the port; *(Shouts.)*
 And hark! fresh shouts of exultation tell
 Th'arrival of the victor.

*Enter Du Mesnil, Hali, Ismena, and other Turkish
 Captives.*

VILLIERS.

Brave Du Mesnil!

Thrice welcome is thy presence. On the day,
 When the free voices of my brother knights
 Have call'd me to a station full of peril,
 To see thee thus victorious is a pledge
 Of future triumphs.

DU MESNIL.

May each enterprize,
 Which thou shalt plan, be crown'd with equal fortune,
 As that which by heav'n's guidance we achiev'd.

VILLIERS.

Thanks, gallant friend! Say, whence and what thy
 prize?

DU MESNIL.

As off the Samian coast I held my cruize,
 This vessel I espied. I gave her chase,
 O'ertook and captur'd her. Of those on board

None seem of estimation, save this maiden,
 Who, if report speak truly of her charms,
 In grace and beauty far transcends her sex.
 I have respected her too much, to say
 If rumour do her justice ; but behold her,
 Veil'd as she was when she became my captive.

VILLIERS.

Damsel ! though chance hath thrown thee on our mercy,
 Here art thou safe. If our respectful service
 Can mitigate captivity, command it.

ISMENA (*unveiling*).

Heroic lords of this renowned isle,
 Whose valour still withstands the mighty pow'r
 Of our imperial Sultan, take my thanks !
 Your slave, to freedom, friends and country lost,
 Hath nothing else to offer.

DAMARAL (*aside*).

What rare beauty !
 (*To Almeida*) Didst thou e'er witness such perfection ?

ALMEIDA.

Never—
 Whate'er of charms can dignify the sex
 Seem in her form assembled.

VILLIERS.

By my life,
 'Twill put his knightly honour to the proof,

Who takes the charge of beauty so alluring.
I covet not the task.

DAVILA.

It were, in truth,
A service of more peril, than to face
Whole legions of her countrymen in arms.

VILLIERS (*to Damaral*).

How say you, noble sir! You are not apt
To shrink from danger.

DAMARAL.

No! In flood or field
I court the post of danger.—But why turn
Your question upon me?—Am I a man
Fit for this courtly function?

VILLIERS.

If the function
Be that of honour, who so fit as Damaral?—
Now tell me, thou, (*to Hali*) that stand'st beside the fair,
What is thy name, thy station and degree?

HALI.

My name is Hali. I was sent in charge
Of this fair damsel on my way tow'rd's Cyprus,
By the command of my imperial master,
The Sultan Soliman, there to espouse her
To the illustrious Selim, who now mourns
The sad detention of his lovely bride,

Ismena, now your captive.

VILLIERS.

Noble lady!

We war not with the fair, and, though proscrib'd
From marriage, venerate its sacred rights.
I will intrust thee to a loyal knight,
Whose high command thy safety shall insure,
And in whose courtesy thou may'st confide.
If noble Damaral would accept the charge—

DAMARAL.

What mean'st thou? I accept?

VILLIERS.

Nay, take me right.

How can a soldier's mistress be more safe,
Than in a soldier's care?—Give me thine ear.

[*Villiers and Damaral retire.*]

HALI (*aside to Ismena*).

Mark how good fortune meets us! This is happy
Beyond our fondest hope. Now spread your snares,
T'entrap the heart of that audacious Christian,
That Damaral, our Sultan's direst foe.

ISMENA.

He seems a gallant gentleman.

HALI.

He's that,

Which we must mould and model to our purpose—

A headstrong, fev'rish fool. I know him well,
And to my cost : so that he know not me,
All shall be right.

ISMENA.

How dignified his mien !
His air how noble !

HALI.

Why dost gaze upon him ?
Thou heed'st me not.—'Tis the eventful moment,
Which must be seiz'd at once, or lost for ever.
See—they advance.—Now give your lures their scope.

VILLIERS.

Beauteous Ismena ! I have urg'd a suit,
In which thy happy star has been propitious ;
And now into the hands of this brave knight,
Than whom our Rhodian Order cannot boast
One of more noble bearing, I commend thee.
And now farewell awhile—my duty calls me.
Du Mesnil ! lead us to the port ; we long
To view the prize thy gallantry has won.

[Exeunt Villiers and train.]

Manent Damaral, Hali, Almeida, and Ismena.

DAMARAL *(to himself)*.

So young, so paramount in ev'ry beauty
Which can adorn her sex ? To me intrusted ?
And why to me ? Why am I singled forth ?

This pref'rence seems suspicious.—Ho! Almeida!—
 See'st thou what mighty honours fall upon me?
 Is it not high command, and glorious service,
 To wait upon that beauteous piece of mischief,
 To minister as her caprice may dictate,
 And play th' obsequious keeper to a minion,
 Whose spells and witchcrafts might ensnare a hermit?
 Wilt not become me, think'st thou?

ALMEIDA.

I must wonder
 That passion should thy better judgment cloud.
 Had our new chief to thee preferr'd another,
 Then might'st thou have complain'd; but when he chose
 thee—

DAMARAL.

Doubtless he had his reasons—aye, and strong ones.
 He hath o'er-topt me. In the face of Rhodes,
 Nay of all Christendom, he tow'rs above me,
 And the first fruits of his ambitious growth
 Are pois'nous to mine honour.

ALMEIDA.

Nay, my lord!
 I pray you be more just.—Think not thus of him.

DAMARAL.

What other thoughts should occupy my soul,
 Than the subversion of my fondest hope,

The ruin of my fame—

ALMEIDA.

No more of this.

See where the damsel, whom thou hast in charge,
With downcast eye thy courtesy awaits.

Her patient suff'rance and unrivall'd charms—

DAMARAL.

I note them but too well. In ev'ry glance
Temptation ambush'd lurks, each gesture teems
With sorcery. In the fair field of war
I heed not peril; 'tis familiar to me—
Here I'm a coward.—Take her to my palace,
Treat her with all thy wonted courtesy,
But let me not behold her.

HALI (*aside to Ismena*).

Mark! he's going—

ISMENA.

My patron! my protector! will you leave me?
I thought I was intrusted to your charge.
Was I accepted only to be scorn'd,
And thrown aside as one not worth a thought?

DAMARAL.

Detain me not, I pray.—I've giv'n full order
For all that may befit thee. Ask—command—
Thy pleasure shall be absolute in all.
But I must hence; the pressure of the time

Requires me.—Nay—I pray thee look not thus—
Be of good cheer. .

ISMENA.

I would thou couldst remain !
I'm little us'd to supplicate for pity ;
'Till now I never sued—

DAMARAL (*aside*).

I'm lost for ever,
If she look so upon me !—(*to Ismena*)—speak not thus—
My palace, wealth, and those who own my sway,
Are thine—command them as thou wilt, but let me
Not linger here.—Almekda, to thy charge !

HALI (*aside*).

Now's the decisive moment. Follow up
Thy 'vantage, and the victory will be ours.

ISMENA.

What? Go'st thou? Then am I despis'd indeed !
Is this the gallantry of Christian warriors?
When I arrive in Cyprus, if they ask me
How captive ladies are receiv'd in Rhodes,
When Damaral, the noblest, bravest, best
Of all his knightly Order treats me thus,
What shall I say?

DAMARAL.

Tell them that Damaral,
Who never fled from battle, fled from thee.

ISMENA.

What can you see in me that you should fly from?
The conqu'ring crescent flames not on my brow.
A harmless captive, what can I devise?
What mischief can you apprehend from me?

DAMARAL.

Infinite mischief!—Thou art much too fair,
And I too sensible of beauty's pow'r.
I would possess myself; for I am thrown
Far in the rear of fortune, and have need
Of all my constancy. But that is lost,
When I converse with thee.

ISMENA.

If you require it,
I will be silent; nothing will I do,
Nothing will meditate, that may disturb
Or check your efforts in your country's cause.
Go forth to combat; bathe your conqu'ring sword
In Turkish blood: I'll call no curses down,
I'll not invoke our Prophet to avenge
The widows and the orphans you have made.

DAMARAL.

Why now it is you shew me all my danger.
'Tis the sweet flatt'ry of those 'witching lips,
The love-inspiring lustre of those eyes,

That give th' alarm to honour.—Be content—
I trust thee to a friend of tried discretion.

ISMENA.

Alas ! your kindness might have sooth'd the sorrows
Of a sad captive cast upon your bounty.
You're doubtless noble ; but there is a virtue
Of which you cannot boast, and that is pity.
Hadst thou been brought a pris'ner to my country,
And to my charge intrusted, I had not
To delegated care abandon'd thee.

DAMARAL.

Say'st thou ?—I see resistance is in vain—
I am the captive—we exchange conditions—
You have prevail'd—I serve, and you command.
Almeida ! let the guard conduct us on.
Those who are here attending, and all others,
Whose services Ismena may require,
Must be allow'd admission to her presence.
Come on, fair lady ! I've no will but thine.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in Damaral's Palace.

Enter Hali and Almeida.

HALI.

THY friend hath here a princely residence,
Well decorated, as becomes his wealth.
Those who, like him, are wont to plough the main,
Reap noble harvests.

ALMEIDA.

Fortune hath in this
Rewarded his exertions: had she prov'd
Not less propitious to his other claims,
His noted valour and unrivall'd fame
Might have exalted him to sov'reign rule.
But I must leave thee. Here, I pray, remain.
My duties call me. *[Exit Almeida.]*

HALI.

Fortune, I'm thy debtor!
To be committed thus to Damaral's charge,

In his own house receiv'd—and then that all
Remembrance should be blotted from his mind
Of me, whose once aspiring hopes he crush'd—
It is most strange. But I forget not thus.
No—deep engrav'd in my avenging soul
The keen remembrance of my wrongs remains.
Once, like himself, beneath the Rhodian banner
 courted fortune; honour, wealth, and fame
Invited my ambition, when this Damaral,
Whose overbearing spirit ne'er could brook
The breach of his injunction, in the face
Of our assembled host degraded me,
Blasted my rising hopes, and left me nought
To sooth my pangs but hatred and revenge.
They are become congenial to my soul :
For them I sought the Turk, for them forsook
The country and religion of my fathers.
By him, whose faith I now profess to bear,
I'll make him render a severe account.
I have that with me, which, if rightly us'd,
Shall hurl him from his height.—But soft—behold him.

Enter Damaral and Ismena.

DAMARAL.

Within these walls, which own me as their master,
Command, fair lady!

ISMENA.

Thanks, my gracious lord !
Thou'rt far too bounteous.—Hali ! join with me
To pay that tribute, which beneficence
Exacts from grateful hearts.

HALI.

On the behalf
Of princely Soliman, I thank thee.

DAMARAL,

Hold—

Thanks are superfluous. Let us have no more.
Lady, I pray thee take me as I am,
A plain, blunt soldier. While beneath this roof,
Nought shall be wanting to thy fair reception.

ISMENA.

My wants are few, and those thy kind attentions
Amplify provide for.

DAMARAL.

Wouldst thou choose to have
Thy guardian Hali still attendant on thee ?

ISMENA.

If such thy pleasure. I have known him long,
And ever found him worthy. He is now
The only friend I have.

DAMARAL.

Not so, fair lady.

Though rough, and all unus'd to courtly fashions,
 We can appreciate excellence like thine,
 And pay the homage which is most thy due.
 Retain thy charge, good Hali—*(to Ismena)*—nay, no thanks.
 I am thy debtor, lady, for th' occasion
 Of proving my obedience to thy wishes.
 But, if it please thee, let us to th' apartment
 Destin'd for thy reception. Come, good Hali,
 We shall require thine aid for such arrangements
 As may be fitting for thy lovely mistress.
 A soldier's followers are not us'd to wait
 On guests like her.—Permit me to conduct thee. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Grand-Master's Palace.

Enter Villiers, Raymond, and Davila.

VILLIERS.

Have all our posts been duly visited?
 These are no times for ease and self-indulgence,
 When the proud Ottoman, beleagu'ring close,
 Threatens th'immediate downfall of our state.

RAYMOND.

All has been done that vigilance can do.
 Yet surely now unequal grows our contest—

VILLIERS.

That thought should urge us on to fresh exertions.

As Christian knights, we should prepare to meet
The will of heav'n. (*Trumpet sounds.*)

What means that loud appeal?

Go forth, good Raymond, and demand the cause.
[*Exit Raymond.*]

DAVILA.

It sounded like a parley. What can move
The Turk, who hitherto hath seem'd t'avoid
All intercourse, save that of ruthless war,
Thus to solicit audience?

Enter Raymond.

RAYMOND.

From the foe
An envoy seeks admission to thy presence.

VILLIERS.

Conduct him hither straight.

[*Exit Raymond.*]

Whate'er his mission,
Friendly or hostile, we're for both prepar'd.

Enter Raymond and Omar.

VILLIERS.

'Approach, and freely speak.

OMAR.

Illustrious chief!

From Mustapha, the delegate of him,

Who, drawing from the Prophet his descent,
His sceptre wield, I greet thee. He hath learnt
That in a bark of war, to Cyprus bound
And captur'd by a galley of your Order,
A damsel, to the governor betroth'd,
Is made a pris'ner. As by knighthood's rules
Both she and her attendants are exempt
From war's stern stricture, so, our Gen'ral trusts,
Thou wilt on just conditions yield them up.

VILLIERS.

Well hast thou said, that not with helpless females
Our Order wages war. Thus far believe :
While here the object of your suit sojourns,
She shall with fitting courtesy be treated.
Say, on what terms doth Mustapha propose
We should accord the captive maid's release ?

OMAR.

Either such ransom as thou may'st require,
Or adequate exchange of such as chance
Hath made his pris'ners.

VILLIERS.

Should we grant your suit,
We shall disdain to barter her for gold :
But for a knight—for such, alas ! there are,
Whom, in despite of valour, fate compels

To bear his fetters—if he will to exchange her—

OMAR.

'Tis not our usage, when a knight is captiv'd,
On any terms his liberty to grant :
Yet doth our chief so highly prize Ismena,
He may for once dispense with rigid rules,
And listen to your proffer.

VILLIERS.

That were well,
And worthy of himself. But say, dost think,
Were we to grant the boon he now demands,
And, on this basis, for th'exchange to treat
Of all whom war, on either side, hath thrown
Into captivity—dost think, I say,
He would concede a truce, 'till we might bring
Our treaty to conclusion ? 'Twere most worthy
To soften thus th'asperities of war.

OMAR.

Send forth, and make your proffer ; I, meanwhile,
Will here remain, a hostage for the safety
Of him whom ye employ.

VILLIERS.

'Tis fairly said.

Give us short space thy proffer to discuss,
And thou shalt know our purpose. Here, meantime,
Abide on our good faith.

OMAR.

There is one Hali,
 Who hath the charge of fair Ismena. Might I,
 By your permission, hold short parlance with him,
 I might impart to him some brief instructions,
 Which Mustapha, on knowledge of her fate,
 Fram'd for the better guidance of her conduct.

VILLIERS.

Thy boon is granted. Raymond ! see thou giv'st him
 Such conduct as befits both him and us ;
 And let the valiant Damaral have due notice,
 As it behoves, of what has now occur'd.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE III.

*Apartment in Damaral's Palace.**Enter Ismena and Hali.*

HALI.

So—our plot works. Thou'st bravely play'd thy part.

ISMENA.

Would it were one more worthy and becoming !
 There's something in this man, that pleads against
 The dark contrivance form'd for his undoing.
 He has a noble nature, richly stor'd
 With rare heroic qualities. 'Tis pity
 To turn them thus against him, and pervert

Heav'n's choice endowments to a guilty purpose.

HALI.

'Tis not for us, the slaves of Soliman,
To scan the merits of our destin'd victim,
To whom this isle, which long hath been esteem'd
The bulwark of the Christian potentates,
Now looks for safety 'gainst the pow'ful force
Commission'd to reduce it. While he heads
The practis'd militants who form his Order,
Doubtful must prove the conflict : he remov'd,
On yon proud ramparts shall our standard wave—

ISMENA.

Hush !—see, he comes—

Enter Damaral.

HALI.

Welcome again, my lord.

We spoke of thy exceeding bounty tow'rd us,
So delicate, so dignified. Believe
My mistress is most thankful.

DAMARAL.

Had it pleas'd
My wayward fate to place me in the station,
Which, without boasting, I might well have fill'd,
I could have giv'n thee, lady, other greeting.
As 'tis—but this is not a theme which suits
Th'occasion.

HALI.

Pardon me—it is a theme
Which suits thee but too well.

DAMARAL.

There was indeed
A time, when I expected the fulfilment
Of my long cherish'd hopes. But that is past.

HALI.

'Tis ever so. From those, whom our exertions
Have aided in the perilous hour of action,
If we require return, ingratitude
Mars expectation. Brave and gen'rous foes
Appreciate best the worth by which they suffer.
They nurse no jealousy, they have no motives—

DAMARAL.

How's this? Methinks thy boldness—

ISMENA.

Chide him not—

He speaks but truth. Ere we Byzantium left,
The rumour of Carette's decease was spread,
And on the choice of a new Rhodian chief
The thoughts of Soliman were turn'd. I've heard him
Discuss the merits of the diff'rent knights,
On whom he thought the Order's choice might fall.
He did full justice to thy worth: but had he
Known thee as I do, could he but have witness'd

Thy gen'rous courtesy—

DAMARAL.

From other lips

Such praise were hateful. I have nothing done
To merit thy approval. Try me farther,
Devise occasions to call forth my zeal—

ISMENA.

I know the fame thou hast acquir'd in arms,
But little did I think to find thee thus,
Combining knightly worth with courtly grace.

DAMARAL.

Fie! thou'rt a flatt'rer—I've no graces, I—
Rude as the boist'rous element I roam,
I cannot play the courtier. I can feel,
And plainly speak the dictates of my heart.

ISMENA.

Ah! could but those, who seek to gain our favour,
Know how superior to their flimsy arts
Sincerity and manly candour shew,
They'd speak and act like thee. I love plain dealing.

DAMARAL.

Thou art in all superior to thy sex.
I have not been a stranger to their charms,
But, on the faith and honour of a soldier
Who scorns deception, never saw I yet
Beauties like thine, which touch at once the sense,

And with soft bondage captivate the soul.

ISMENA.

Oh speak not thus ! Hast thou so soon forgotten
With what design I bent my course to Cyprus ?
Hast thou ? Alas ! I had myself forgotten.

DAMARAL.

Forgotten, say'st thou ? And didst thou forget it ?
To Cyprus ?—Selim ?—Aye, 'twas so—by heav'n !
It cannot, must not be—

ISMENA.

Ah ! cease, my lord—

I must not hear thee. Had I been convey'd
At once to Cyprus, had I never known thee,
Ne'er felt thy kindness, my unpractis'd heart
Had haply not rebell'd against its fate.
As 'tis—I do beseech you pardon me. (Going.

DAMARAL.

Ah ! go not thus away, nor coldly check
The gen'rous dictates of thy feeling breast—

ISMENA.

I may not answer—cannot, dare not hear thee—
I know not what I say—the heart will feel—
The tongue will wander—stay me not I pray—
Had I but known thee ere my fate was fix'd—
What is't I've said ?—Oh ! think not harshly of me—
Farewell—I go to be again myself. [Exit.

DAMARAL.

Am I myself? My better half seems gone
When she departs.

HALI.

My gracious lord seems mov'd.

DAMARAL.

Who can unmov'd perfection's self behold?

HALI.

That she's most fair is true; yet her pure mind
Transcends her outward charms. She has a heart,
Gentle, affectionate; tumultuous passion
As yet ne'er made it throb: he, who shall gain it,
Shall gain a treasure richer than the crown
Of Asia's sovereign.

DAMARAL.

I believe thee truly—

So rare a creature were indeed a treasure
Monarchs might envy. Would it were my lot!

HALI.

Whose could it be who would so well deserve it?
Fam'd as thou art beyond all Christian knights,
She of all peerless maids Byzantium boasts
The sweetest paragon of loveliness—
By heav'n! the union of such excellence
Must in the book of fate have been predestin'd.—
Nay, my good lord, I pray thee give me hearing.

Hath not some secret guidance hither led her ?
Is she not here an inmate ?—There is more
In this than merely chance could have produc'd.

DAMARAL.

'Tis, as thou sayst.—But would'st thou have me think—

HALI.

I know not what it is thou may'st not think.
My thoughts are busy. 'Tis not in thy nature
To prove insensible of charms like her's,
And as for her, whose heart ne'er own'd the sway
Of am'rous passion, how can she withstand
Attractions such as thine ?

DAMARAL.

As mine ?—No, no !

She ne'er would think of me—my bloom is past—
I lack the courtly elegance that wins
The favour of her sex !

HALI.

Thou may'st not be
In life's first spring : unlike our pamper'd youth,
The hour of action thou hast not consum'd
In idle dalliance. What of that ? Thy fame,
Thy feats in war, the glorious scars thou bearest,
Will often weigh in female bosoms more
Than their trim graces. When you spoke, methought
No common feelings mov'd her. Mark'd you not

How came and went her colour? I ne'er saw her
Affected thus.

DAMARAL.

I noted a confusion—

But I had no concern—

HALI.

I know not that.

She is a woman; women have quick eyes,
And make a juster estimate of men,
Than men do of themselves. I should not wonder
If she were mov'd, when she convers'd with one,
Whose signal worth she had so long been taught
T'admire and venerate.

DAMARAL.

Knew she aught of me?

HALI.

Oft have we talk'd of thy illustrious deeds,
And oft thy gallantry provok'd her praise.
'Twas, I remember, on the fatal day,
When to Byzantium the report arriv'd
Of the surpassing victory thou hadst gain'd
Over the Turkish fleet on Cyprus' shore—

DAMARAL.

Yes! 'twas my doing—yet I'm now pass'd over,
While Villiers—but it matters not—proceed.

HALI.

'Tis strange—I crave thy pardon for my boldness—
'Tis surely strange that those, who might appreciate
Thy services, should thus repay a deed—

DAMARAL.

Enough—I know not how we've wander'd thus.
Thou spok'st of fair Ismena's partial judgment.

HALI.

'Tis true. As of thy prowess we discours'd,
She with uplifted eyes remain'd awhile
As if in silent transport, then on the sudden
She cried, " what godlike valour ! Oh that Selim
" Were but renown'd like him, then would Ismena
" Fly to his conqu'ring arms and wed his glory ! "

DAMARAL.

Did she say that ?—It may—yet 'tis not likely
She should so quickly feel a soft impression.

HALI.

'Tis not unlikely for a maid like her.
She is not one whom practice of the world
Hath caution taught. Secluded from all converse,
Like a poor bird, confin'd within its cage,
She sigh'd for freedom ; from whatever hand
The boon might come, 'twould have been acceptable.
Now, set at large, she finds she has a heart,

She feels it glow, she hails its gen'rous impulse,
And gives it to a corresponding spirit,
Attun'd to love, and worthy of the blessing.

DAMARAL.

I would I might believe thee.

HALI.

Good my lord,
My life for your's 'tis so. I've known her long,
And cannot be deceiv'd. Her ev'ry look
Betray'd her secret passion—speak to her—
Judge for thyself—

DAMARAL.

Thou'st set my soul on fire—
But was she not intrusted to my charge,
A soldier's mistress to a soldier's care?
'Twas so—it may not be.

HALI.

It might not be,
Were he her choice or worthy to possess her.
But such is not her fate. She knows him not,
Nor, did she know him, would her gentle heart
Own him its master. By the Sultan's pow'r.
Consign'd to the stern sway of one, more fit
To call her daughter than to hail her bride,
Think what a fate is her's! Did she not weep
When we discours'd of Cyprus? Own'd she not

That when she look'd on thee she had forgotten—

DAMARAL.

She did—she did—

HALI.

Why disbelieve her then ?

Why hesitate at once to know thy bliss ?

The foeman's sword could never keep thee back :

Let not the smiles of willing beauty daunt thee.

Come, come, my lord—let's have no further parly ;

Fortune befriends the bold, and love rewards them !

[*Exit.*

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

*Damaral's Palace.**Enter Hali.*

HALI.

THE lark, when high in his aërial flight,
Arrested by the practis'd fowler's voice,
Will sink unconscious of the fatal net
Spread for his ruin. Not a beast that ranges
In licens'd freedom the wild wilderness
But may be trammell'd by the hunter's art:
And man, imperious man, who thus subdues
All meaner natures, let a bait be offer'd
Of pow'r to tempt his wayward appetite,
Sinks from his fancied eminence, and falls
The poor degraded victim of temptation.
The haughty Damaral himself, that hero,
That demi-god, he whose resistless sword
Spread through the Turkish legions wide dismay,
Caught by a wanton female's vain allurements,

Bows to her sway, and supplicates for ruin.
'Tis ready for him—the deep mine is charg'd,
And nought is wanting but the needful hand
To apply the match.—Would Omar but arrive
To second my bold effort—

Enter Almeida.

ALMEIDA.

Hast thou heard
One Omar, envoy from the Turkish Sultan,
Hath reach'd our harbour?

HALI.

Omar, didst thou say?
(*Aside*) By heav'n! he comes propitious to my purpose—
(*To Almeida*) Omar!—I know him not.—Is it yet bruited
What is his mission's object?

ALMEIDA.

If report
Speak justly of his purpose, he's empower'd
For the surrender of our guest to treat.
But who are these?

Enter Raymond and Omar.

RAYMOND.

I come from our Grand-Master,
To impart to Damaral what has late occur'd,
And for this envoy from the Turkish camp
To ask short parlance with the captive Hali.

ALMEIDA.

Damaral will give thee audience. For the rest,
Behold the captive Hali.

OMAR.

Art thou he,
To whom the fair Ismena was intrusted?

HALI.

I have that charge.

OMAR.

I would impart to thee—
Your favour, gallant knights! I've that to say
Which female delicacy renders sacred.

RAYMOND.

Take thy full license—say whate'er thou will'st—
I will to Damaral straight, and then rejoin thee.

ALMEIDA.

This way, good Raymond—

[Exeunt Raymond and Almeida.]

HALI.

Doubly art thou welcome!
Our harvest's ripe, and waited but thy hand
To reap it fully. Precious are the moments
Which fortune gives us. Let them not be lost.
Com'st thou to treat for our release?

OMAR.

Such is

The simulated purpose of my mission.

As thou hast prosper'd, I must act. Instruct me—

Shall I urge on my suit, or, to gain time—

HALI.

Give him no time—for, if he once reflect,

Our project will be vain.—Give him no time—

Press home thy suit, and leave the rest to me.

But soft—his friend returns.—I've more to say,

Which calls for privacy—

Enter Almeida.

HALI (to Omar).

Thy words are sage,

And shall be graven in thy servant's heart.

(To Almeida) Save thee, good sir.

ALMEIDA.

I pray you rest within.

While in our hospitality ye share,

Ye may what yet remains at ease discuss.

OMAR.

We thank thee for thy kindness—pray lead on.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Another Apartment in Damara's Palace.

Damara and Ismena.

ISMENA.

Ah cease, my lord! I may not hear thee more.

In all thou say'st, there is a shew of truth,
 A glow of gen'rous sentiment so warm,
 That an unpractis'd heart like mine might melt
 To its undoing, were I to believe thee.

DAMARAL.

Trust me, my fair, mine is no flatt'ring tongue;
 Untutor'd in the eloquence of love,
 It fails to speak the dictates of my heart.
 Could'st thou read that, thou would'st not doubt my truth.

ISMENA.

I would not doubt it—pardon me, my lord—
 I know not what I say—I ought to doubt it:
 'Tis dang'rous to believe. "A lover's vows"
 Are light as air, no sooner breath'd than gone.
 Who trusts to them is lost.

DAMARAL.

A lover's vows

Are true as holy faith when honour breathes them.
 Credit me, fair, not love itself could tempt me
 To vouch an ardour which I did not feel:
 Nay, did I think thy heart avow'd a passion
 For him to whom thy Sultān hath assign'd thee,
 I'd not aspire to gain thee. If thou lov'st him,
 Confess it, and, howe'er severe the trial,
 Whate'er may prove the pang, I'll own his right,
 And bury my presumptuous love in silence.

ISMENA.

Love him ? Love Selim ? No ! Whate'er my fate,
 No pow'r shall make me own him as my lord.
 Rather, secluded from the sight of men,
 Would I in solitude consume my youth,
 Or, doom'd to bondage, by incessant toil
 Procure a scanty sustenance, than wed him.

DAMARAL.

Then may I hope, then may my tow'ring wishes
 Aspire to thy perfections. Oh Ismena !
 'Till now I never felt the pow'r of love :
 A rugged soldier, 'till I view'd thy charms
 I knew it but by name. Now, now I own it,
 And at thy feet breathe forth my raptur'd soul.

ISMENA.

Arise, my lord—nay, kneel not thus before me—
 How can I answer thee ?

DAMARAL.

I ask not words :

A look, a smile, can reach my heart, and tell
 What words can never speak—how now ! who's that ?

Enter Almeida.

Why thus intrude upon my privacy ?

ALMEIDA.

Raymond awaits, and present audience craves.

DAMARAL.

What brings him now? Was there no other time
But this to break upon me?—Bid him hence.

ALMEIDA.

There is an envoy from the Turk arriv'd,
Who brings proposals—

DAMARAL.

Say'st thou from the Turk?
That may not be dispens'd with. (*To Ismena*). For a moment

I must receive him. Trust me, fair, I will not
Be absent from thee long. (*To Almeida*). Bid him approach.

[*Exit Almeida.*]

(*To Ismena*) Retire awhile, I pray; he'll soon depart,
Then with impatience will I fly to thee.

ISMENA.

I shall expect thee—think me not too bold
That thus I speak—let fair construction wait
On my defect—my heart, alas! will feel—

DAMARAL.

Thou'rt all perfection! Heav'n is in thine eye,
Thy glance is rapture, and thy touch is madness!
Curse on the chance that interrupts my transport!—
Hark!—He's at hand—away, away, away!
He may not see thee—all my soul goes with thee.

[*Exit Ismena.*]

Enter Raymond.

So, sir! What please you to require of me?

RAYMOND.

By Villiers am I charg'd to give thee notice
There is an envoy from the Turk arriv'd—

DAMARAL.

Well—what of him?—There is a certain matter
Which calls for my attention—so be brief.

RAYMOND.

Thus then it is. He urges the release
Of the fair maid—

DAMARAL.

Ismena?

RAYMOND.

Of Ismena.

Either for ransom, which our chief disdains,
Or by exchange for pris'ners of our own.

DAMARAL.

He hath refus'd her?

RAYMOND.

No—he deems it best
To treat with him, perhaps obtain a truce,
Which may give time for succours to arrive.
Thou heed'st me not. Attend, I pray—

DAMARAL.

To what?

To the crude fancies of an idle dreamer,
Who, when the time demands our swords, expects
By idle courtesies to win success?
Let's hear no more on't!

RAYMOND.

I beseech your patience.
If we can save the blood of our brave friends—

DAMARAL.

There was a time when in our swords we trusted,
When Rhodian honour scorn'd to meet a foe
Except in equal field. But that is over.
Go—tell your courtly ruler I'm too old
To learn new fashions.

RAYMOND.

Nay, reflect, I pray.

DAMARAL.

'Tis beyond bearing he should thus presume
Of his own will to give the damsel up—

RAYMOND.

Thou dost mistake him—

DAMARAL.

No—I know him well—
But go, bear answer to your haughty chief,
I have accepted her in charge, and will not
To please his new caprice surrender her.

RAYMOND.

Since it is so, farewell!

[*Exit Raymond.*]

DAMARAL.

Surrender her!

No! were whole hosts of Ottomans to claim her,
 I'd guard her with my life!—Surrender her!
 Just at the moment when she's mine to lose her!
 For what? To pleasure him?—'Tis beyond bearing—
 He master here in Rhodes! He to decide!
 He to command me! Heav'n and earth! My sou
 Labours within me, when I think upon
 His elevation and mine own defeat.
 A sycophantic courtier, one well read
 In diplomatic lore, cunning to treat
 Of embassies and such like scrambling stuff,
 A carpet knight, who, while my limbs were cas'd
 In rugged steel, clad his in ermin'd robes,
 And wielded in his weak enervate hand,
 Unfit for nobler instrument, his pen,
 The while in mine the faulchion of our Order
 Spread wide destruction through the Turkish host—

Enter Hali.

HALI.

Pardon, my lord, if I unbidden enter
 To pay my duty, and return my thanks

For all thy courtesies. Since 'tis decreed
We now must leave thee—

DAMARAL.

Hast thou heard it then ?

HALI.

Though freedom be a boon we all would grasp at,
Yet sometimes we are willing slaves. I fear
There's one among us, who will not rejoice
To quit a mild captivity for thralldom
More irksome far—

DAMARAL.

What mean'st thou ?

HALI.

Poor Ismena !

Untoward is thy fate; thy tender heart
Will hardly bear the shock which now awaits it.
To be consign'd to hateful Selim's arms—

DAMARAL.

She shall not go—no pow'r on earth shall force her—
Let Villiers, if he dare, come here to claim her—

HALI.

No, no, my lord—invested as he is
With all the pow'r and influence of your Order,
He has more certain means to work his ends.
He's cool and politic ; thou wert his rival ;
He knows thou'rt his superior in renown,

And only waits occasion to evince
That hatred, which a little soul will feel
For those it fears.

DAMARAL.

I care not for his hatred.

HALI.

I look'd for such reply; it well becomes
The hero, whom, of those who grace our age,
Th'impartial voice of fame hath mostly deck'd
With glory, and bespeaks the proud disdain
Of a brave spirit, struggling 'gainst the tide
Of adverse fortune. Yet it most concerns thee
Not too contemptuously to underrate
A foe who, like thy rival, holds a pow'r
Which at a stroke may crush thee. Well are known
Thy valour, and thy high repute in arms:
But he is deck'd with such authority,
That Damaral's self must bow—

DAMARAL.

Thou know'st me not.

Let him take heed. If I am once provok'd,
My arm can reach him, though he's plac'd so high.

HALI.

'Tis bravely spoken. If my feeble aid—
I crave forgiveness—I am but a captive,
One of whose faith thou hast not had experience,

Nor other testimony than the voice
Of my fair mistress.

DAMARAL.

Can I ask for more?

She, who is truth and purity itself,
Assur'd me she had prov'd and found thee true.

HALI.

I have indeed been faithful to her service,
And for the man on whom her pref'rence falls
I would do much. I could, an I might speak—

DAMARAL.

Say what thou wilt. But what avails thy zeal,
When ev'ry hope, which love or fair ambition
Once fondly cherish'd, is for ever lost?

HALI.

When fortune seems most adverse, gen'rous minds
Find in themselves fresh energies. 'Tis true
A hated rival is preferr'd before thee—

DAMARAL.

Why waken thus remembrances so cruel?
Couldst thou indeed teach me to sate my vengeance—

HALI.

I could.

DAMARAL.

'T were well thou didst.

HALI.

Thou art not one
Whom danger can appal ; thou wouldst not shrink
At glory's call to meet impending fate.
But canst thou face opinion ? Canst thou brave
The prejudices which enslave mankind ?

DAMARAL.

Thy questions are mysterious.

HALI.

I'll be plainer :
I will not doubt thy firmness, but will shew thee
How in thy gen'rous nature I confide.
There is a secret, which, if I disclose it,
May touch my life.—Thy patience, I beseech thee—
Most nearly it concerns thee : all thy hopes,
Revenge, ambition, love, depend upon it.
My bosom holds it : there's no human pow'r
Can tear it from me. To none else but thee,
Whose cause I make my own, would I impart it.

DAMARAL.

Whate'er it be, thou may'st disclose it safely.

HALI.

I doubt thee not ; yet deem me not intrusive,
If, ere I put my life into thy hands,
I ask more strong assurance. Wilt thou pledge

Thy knightly honour, that, whate'er I say,
Thou wilt not take advantage of my frankness,
Or make me suffer for my boundless zeal
For thee and thy best int'rests ?

DAMARAL.

Say no more.

Damaral disdains to wrong the man who trusts him.
Whate'er may be thy secret, on the honour
Of a true knight, no mischief shall betide thee.

HALI.

I take thy pledge.—Now grant me thy attention.
I am not what I seem. I am a man
Long honour'd with the Sultan's confidence.
I know his secret thoughts, and, 'mongst them, this :
That, 'midst his Christian foes, there's not a knight
Whose worth he so esteems, whose warlike fame
So highly he appreciates, as thine own.
'Tis so, believe me.

DAMARAL.

He has had no cause

To love or praise me.

HALI.

True—of all his foes

He has had most cause to deprecate thy valour.
But far beyond the scope of vulgar minds
His spirit soars. Though in an enemy,

He can distinguish merit and confess it.

DAMARAL.

Nay, though he threaten to subvert our Order,
I scruple not to own his princely worth.

HALI.

'Tis nobly said. Now come I to the point.
As far beyond all Christian knights he rates thee,
With that becoming candour, which adorns
A gen'rous soul like his, he would evince
His full conviction of thy high desert.

DAMARAL.

What mean'st thou?

HALI.

Thus it is. When I at Cyprus
Should land my charge, he bad me find the means
Of passing hither. By the chance of war,
In this at least propitious to his hope,
Have I thus soon accomplish'd his intent.

DAMARAL.

Dost thou ~~commission~~ bear from Soliman?
Dar'st thou avow it?

HALI.

On thy solemn pledge
Relying, I intrust thee with my life.
'Tis in thy pow'r; thou may'st imbrue thy sword
In my heart's blood; or give me over to torture—

But thou'rt too noble.

DAMARAL.

True—my word is pledg'd.

Thou'rt safe—proceed—

HALI.

Behold this scroll—nay, start not—

I had it from my royal master's self—

DAMARAL.

Keep it away—I may not look on it—

HALI.

It breathes no pestilence—thou may'st with safety
Peruse its characters. Thou know'st already
What is its end and purport. It contains
The sentiments of one who feels thy worth.

DAMARAL.

I know not if I ought—already, saidst thou,
Am I advis'd of its contents?—Here—give it—ha!
(*Reads*) “From Soliman, the master of the world,
“To valiant Damaral health”—

HALI.

I told thee so.

Thou see'st the Sultan owns thy high desert,
And would embrace thee as a friend.

DAMARAL.

I do—

But on what terms?

HALI.

Read on.

DAMARAL (*reads*).

“Thou aim’st at pow’r;

“But courtly artifice will thwart thy wishes;

“Villiers will gain the government of Rhodes.”—

How learnt he that?

HALI.

From him are not conceal’d

The machinations of your Christian princes.

Imperial Charles, who knew thou would’st not yield

Implicit def’rence to his haughty will,

Supported him against thee.

DAMARAL.

Was it so?

By heav’n! I thought it—but I’m glad I know it.

(*Reads*) “Should Rhodes by thy assistance ope her gates,

“On thee its sov’reignty will I confer:

“I will maintain thy throne, and from thy loins

“Shall issue dynasties of future kings.”—

Here—take it back again—it must not be—

HALI.

Not be? Forbid it fate! Shall great revenge,
Shall regal dignity be slighted thus?

Wouldst on thy rival’s head avenge thy wrongs,

Snatch from his feeble hand th’imperial sceptre,

Be hail'd the Rhodian king? Or, if thou lov'st,
Wilt thou stand tamely by, while from thine arms
They tear Ismena, while her peerless beauties,
Thine own, if thou assert them, are consign'd
To him she most detests, when by a word
Thou may'st proclaim to all the world thy love,
And place a diadem upon her brow?

DAMARAL.

Give me some pause—

HALI.

Will Villiers, think'st thou, give it?
Perhaps his orders are already issued
To rob thee of thy love.—Give thee some pause!
Would that my words were light'nings to inflame
All that is man in thee!

DAMARAL.

I am a man.

Thou'dst have me more.

HALI.

I would. I'd have thee rise
To the true level of thy princely soul,
I'd hail thee king, I'd give thee thine Ismena!
Thou know'st my master's power; he can, he will
Fulfil his promise.

DAMARAL.

'Tis a tempting proffer—

But it is rated at a price so high—

HALI.

Can it be rated at a price too high?

DAMARAL.

I do confess—but say, should I accept it,
What surety is there that, if Rhodes were his,
He would these ample promises fulfil?

HALI.

His honour. 'Tis a high and sacred pledge,
Which ne'er was forfeited. I took thy word,
And scrupled not t'intrust thee with my life—

DAMARAL.

Thou didst.—But still the plan's impracticable.
We are beleagu'rd round; none can go forth:
And if one might, where could I find a friend,
Whom I might trust with Mustapha to treat?

HALI.

Canst thou trust me?

DAMARAL.

I think I may.

HALI.

Thou may'st.

DAMARAL.

Nay, credit me, I think it. But thou canst not—

HALI.

There's nought more easy. Grant me thy attention.

If Villiers shall persist in his design,
 Give semblance of consent : then, when his choice
 Of one to treat of it with Mustapha
 Is undecided, name me.

DAMARAL.

He'll not hear on't.

HALI.

Why not ? I shall be only charg'd to bring
 The Turk's response. A captive may do that,
 And save your knights from a degrading function.
 Nay, they will have security enough
 For my fidelity and prompt return,
 When they reflect that on them must depend
 Th'enlargement of Ismena. Gain but this,
 And trust to my address for full success.

DAMARAL.

There's much in what thou say'st—

Enter Almeida.

ALMEIDA.

Most noble sir,

Thy presence is requested at the council,
 Where Villiers waits thy coming, to decide
 What answer shall be render'd to the Turk.

DAMARAL.

My instant presence at the council, say'st thou ?
 (*To Hali*) 'Tis somewhat sudden.

HALI.

'Tis a hint from fortune.

Neglect it not. Thy fate rests on the moment.

A throne—Ismena—vengeance—

DAMARAL (*to Almeida*).

I'll obey him.

[*Exit Almeida.*

DAMARAL.

The die is cast—my fate is on the stake—

I will rely upon the Sultan's faith.

Expect my prompt return. Prepare thee straight.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

The Grand-Master's Palace.

Villiers, Raymond, Davila, and other Knights discovered.

RAYMOND.

So ended my discourse with Damaral.
In my relation I have much suppress'd
Of what rude passion utter'd.

VILLIERS.

It is pity,
That such a gallant gentleman as he is
Should thus give way to moody discontent.

DAVILA.

He hath a spirit which disdains controul:
The shadow of authority disturbs him.
I never saw so proud a man, or one
So little form'd to struggle with reverses.
His recent disappointment taints his mind,
And brooding envy works so strongly in him,
That, did occasion suit—

VILLIERS.

Think better of him,
Nor breathe suspicion 'gainst his high desert.
Though rough, he's honest, and, though hasty, loyal.

DAVILA.

You judge him by yourself. A noble nature
From the clear mirror of its own pure soul
The characters of other men reflects,
Sheds a resplendent ray of glory round them,
Transforming all their frailties to perfection.

VILLIERS.

If to think well of others be a weakness,
I am indeed most weak. We all have frailties,
And that, of which we're conscious in ourselves,
We should with charity excuse in others.
The gallant Damaral has approv'd himself
Our Order's best support : let us then weigh
His merits 'gainst his faults, and we shall find
How they prepond'rate.—But no more—He comes.

Enter Damaral.

DAMARAL.

Here on thy summons I attend.

VILLIERS.

'Tis well.

Thou know'st the cause wherefore we thus assemble,
But we are yet to learn why thou disdain'st

Our mandate.

DAMARAL.

Noble sirs ! Ye have known me long,
My merits and defects. I need not tell you
I am a man of plain, unvarnish'd manners,
Unpractis'd in the modes of courtly life,
Who never studied grace, or learn'd to mould
My phrases to the fashion of the time.
What passes in my heart my tongue will speak,
And, when I'm mov'd by choler, I am apt
To give free utt'rance to my sudden thought.
This ye all know ; and, if too strongly now
Or hastily of what ye plann'd I spoke,
Let your good favour pardon my defect.

VILLIERS.

'Tis spoken like thyself.—Thou know'st the Turk
Asks with strong instance the release of her
Whom brave Du Mesnil took. Could our compliance
Obtain from them a truce, the Christian pow'rs
Might then have time to send their wish'd-for aid.

DAMARAL.

And thereto do your councils tend ?

VILLIERS.

They do.

DAMARAL.

To treat with Mustapha ?—We never yet

Held parley with our unbelieving foe.
'Tis 'gainst our rule. Yet, as you sagely judge,
Th'occasion seems to warrant it. Then why
Reject what our necessities require?
Whom send you forth?

VILLIERS.

That is a point, whereon
Thy judgment may assist us.

DAMARAL.

'Tis indeed
A service which discretion will require,
And yet 'tis such as will degrade the doer.
When heard ye, since our Order had existence,
That any knight so far forgot his station,
As the forbearance of the foe to court?

VILLIERS.

So stand the rule and practice of our Order.
Yet this, methinks, is an exception to it :
For, after all, what is it but t'arrange
Terms of exchange for those we captive hold?

DAMARAL.

True—'tis no more.—Yet that is all too much,
And may have consequences—no !—'tis certain
Ye cannot send a knight.—But then whom else?—
Let me reflect.—A thought has just occur'd,—
How far 't may be expedient you must judge,—

Why, when none else can fitly be employ'd—
For so it is—should you not try the captive,
Who hither with the damsel came?

DAVILA.

The captive?

What know'st thou of the captive?—Trust to him!

DAMARAL.

In what respect, I pray, can he deceive us?
What is the object of his purpos'd mission?
The freedom of the damsel. What the terms
On which that boon depends? A truce. Who then
So fitly may be trusted with the charge,
As he who feels most int'rest in her welfare?
He seems well suited to the task, and trusty.

VILLIERS.

We know him not. If thou hast cause to trust him—

DAMARAL.

Cause, say'st thou?—No—I talk'd with him indeed—
The lady much commends him.—For myself,
I have no cause—but she must know him best.—
(*Aside*) How ill I play the hypocrite! (*To Villiers*)

'Tis certain

He has an int'rest, which none other has,
To prompt him to exertion.

VILLIERS.

He hath so.

Shall we commission one to bring him hither ?

DAMARAL.

'Twere sagely done.—(*Aside*) If I stay longer here,
My feelings will betray me. (*To Villiers*) There's a
matter,

Which presses strongly, and requires my presence.
I'll send him to thee. Judge of him thyself;
And give him thine instructions.—I will send him.

[*Exit Damaral.*]

DAVILA.

What? So abruptly gone?—I marvel much
He thus should change without apparent cause.
To Raymond now all fury, venting threats
'Gainst any who should dare remove the maid;
Now, first to send her back.—And then the captive—
'Till now a total stranger; yet he vouches
He is deserving trust. He may be so;
But I would have other security,
Than that he gives us.

VILLIERS.

Be content, I pray.
If he be such as Damaral has describ'd,
It may be well to use him.

DAVILA.

I have done.—
Raymond! a word.—Let's watch this trusty captive.

I like not over confidence.

RAYMOND.

Agreed.

VILDIERS.

Come with me, friends ! Let us th'instruction frame
For our new messenger. Should our attempt
Meet with success, our pains are well bestow'd;
If not, upon our arms and oft-tried valour
Let us depend, and look to heav'n for safety.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

An Apartment in Damaral's Palace.

Enter Hali.

HALI.

I would he were return'd ! He went prepar'd
To second all my views ; but who can tell
What mischief cool reflection may produce ?
They know not, who have never tried deceit,
How perilous it is. When my blood's hot,
And all my faculties are rous'd to action,
I mock at danger : but suspense unmans me.—
'Tis strange he comes not !—If I can but lead him
Into the snare devis'd for him, his ruin
Follows immediate. Either Rhodes must fall,
And all his flatt'ring hopes be buried with it,
Or to the world his treasons shall be blazon'd.

I care not which betide. Whatever chance,
My vengeance will be full.

Enter Ismena.

ISMENA.

I'm glad I've found thee.

Know'st thou of Damaral aught?

HALI.

He is gone forth

On what imports us mainly. Our design
Is prosp'rous far beyond our warmest hope.
All his wild passions, leagued against himself,
Champion our purposes. I hold him fast—

ISMENA.

I'm sorry for it !

HALI.

How's that?—Sorry, say'st thou?

ISMENA.

I am a woman, and perhaps I feel
A woman's weakness ; but there's something tells me
We are engag'd in an unworthy cause.
Had he been otherwise than I have found him—

HALI.

I tell thee, had he been less prone to yield
To the dominion of ungovern'd passion,
Our project had been marr'd. If we succeed
To warp him from his duty, all the glory

Of this important conquest will be ours.

ISMENA.

Think of the princely qualities of him,
Whom thus we doom to ruin. If he err,
His very faults are the excess of virtue.

HALI.

Give o'er this idle talk !—Thou should'st have pleaded
Thy nature's weakness ere we left Byzantium.

ISMENA.

Oh would that heav'n had sav'd me from a share
In guilt, from which my feelings now recoil !
How can I hear him pour forth vows of love,
Read in his ev'ry glance ingenuous passion,
And, like an adder foster'd in his bosom,
Distil insidious poison ?—Think me not
So lost to ev'ry feeling, so devoid—

HALI.

I heed not what thou art, so thou be firm.
Our triumph's sure ; then comes our rich reward—

ISMENA.

Perish the thought ! What ? For a deed like this ?
The very beasts, that range the fields for prey,
May be subdued by kindness. They can feel,
But I—too horrible !—than they more cruel,
Combine to ruin him who loves me best.
And what a man ! First among Europe's heroes,

Brave, gen'rous—

HALI.

Cease—I'll hear no more—retire—

And mark—when Damaral shall revisit thee,
See thou receiv'st him as thou ought'st. Call forth
All thy seducing charms, greet him with smiles,
But, as thou lov'st thy life, give not a hint
Which may instil suspicion in his soul.
Begone! I have no time to lose with thee!

ISMENA.

Nay, force me not away!—I pray thee hear me!

HALI.

Away! [*He forces her out.*]

So! this is well.—The shaft I aim'd
'Gainst Damaral will recoil upon myself,
If I prevent it not. She must have feelings!—
'Tis mine own fault: I should have known her sex.
But hold—he comes at last. Now must I dress
My face in smiles.

Enter Damaral.

Welcome, my gracious lord!
I waited with impatience thy return.
How goes our enterprize? Thy looks are cheering—

DAMARAL.

Are they? I guess'd not that. In sooth, my mind
Feels more than wonted trouble. I'm not us'd

To wear a double face, or make my tongue
The lying herald of my heart.

HALI.

'Twere well,
If we could always reach our purpos'd aim
By the straight path. Yet wise men have affirm'd
(What sage experience warrants) 'tis the end
Which justifies the means. Would'st thou in war
Disclose thy real purpose, that the foe
Might praise thy candour, and defeat thy plan?
That were stark folly. He, who best can veil
The stroke he aims, is surest of success.

DAMARAL.

Yet could I wish, so hateful is it to me,
We might dispense with that which so degrades
A soldier's honour. There's a madd'ning whirl
Of thought within me—

HALI.

Think of it no more.
What tidings bring'st thou?

DAMARAL.

All—but my sharp reflections—
All seem auspicious. They—

HALI.

Nay, my good lord—

DAMARAL.

I had forgotten.—Villiers hath consented
To send thee forth to treat of the conditions,
And wills thee to repair to him forthwith.

HALI.

Then let me not delay. Time now is precious.
Look for my prompt return.—Farewell, my lord!

[As he is going, he turns back.]

Yet hold—my zeal had nearly overrun
My better judgment. How could I forget
That which omitted might have foil'd our hopes?

DAMARAL.

Have foiled them?

HALI.

Aye, my lord. Though Mustapha,
Who knows me, might not have refused me credence
On things of less concern, yet, on a matter
Like this, he might demur. He would demand,
What proof hast thou of Damaral's confidence?
And what am I to answer?—I have none.

DAMARAL.

What proof would he require?

HALI.

Suppose thou giv'st me—
Under thy hand I mean—two lines of credence?

'Tis a mere trifle.

DAMARAL.

How?—a trifle, say'st thou?

HALI.

'Tis of no farther use, than to convince
Our Gen'ral of my truth. But that's essential.
It matters not what evidence I have,
If it do that. Perhaps we may devise
Some other means.—Aye—that will do as well.—
Thou bear'st a signet, whereon is engrav'd
Thine Order's blazoning, the Christian Cross.
Suppose thou giv'st me that?

DAMARAL.

I'll give thee nought!

HALI.

And why refuse it me?—Dost thou then doubt me?

DAMARAL.

Give me thy hand.—In very truth, good Hali!
I do believe thee honest.

HALI.

Give me proof on't.—

What do I ask?—The means of thy success.

DAMARAL.

I would do much; but this, which thou requir'st,
Is of such moment—

HALI.

Thou dost doubt me then ?

If so, farewell ! I find I knew thee not.

Let thy successful rival keep his pow'r,

Forego the crown which thy acceptance courts ;

Let fair Ismena from thine arms be torn,

Let her be giv'n to Selim—

DAMARAL.

Say no more—

I scorn to treat with him I would not trust—

Here—take it (*gives the signet*). See thou guard'st it
carefully.

HALI.

As mine own life. Thou may'st rely upon me.

DAMARAL.

Nay, I distrust not thee so much as fortune.

HALI.

Doubt nothing. Fare-thee-well ! [*Exit Hali.*]

DAMARAL.

Stay yet a moment !—

He's gone !—That signet—'tis a trust—

Enter Ismena.

ISMENA.

My lord !

DAMARAL.

My lov'd Ismena ! They have kept me from thee—

ISMENA.

If thou com'st now in time for me to save thee,
I shall be blest indeed.

DAMARAL.

What means my love?

ISMENA.

Hast thou seen Hali?

DAMARAL.

Even now he left me,
As thou cam'st hither.

ISMENA.

Had ye much discourse?

DAMARAL.

We had.—Why look'st thou thus?—Thy colour changes!

ISMENA.

Pass'd any thing which may affect thee nearly?
Forgive me, Damaral! for I have a cause,
Grave as thy life, essential as thine honour.

DAMARAL.

What say'st thou?—Is then Hali a deceiver?
What then—oh heav'nly pow'rs!—What then art thou?

ISMENA.

Oh! I'm a wretch, who have no other plea
For thy forgiveness than too late repentance.
I'm plung'd in guilt so black, thy noble nature
Must fail to fathom it. Had I foreseen

Thou wert but half so gen'rous and so kind
 As I have found thee, not the Sultan's pow'r
 Nor Hali's arts had made me an accomplice—

DAMARAL.

In what?

ISMENA.

Oh look not thus!—How can I tell thee
 The sum of my offence?—Thou'lt hate me—fly me—
 Here, in my guilty heart, thy weapon plant,
 Forget that I'm a woman, look upon me
 As one with demons leagued for thy destruction!

DAMARAL.

Almeida! Ho!

Enter Almeida.

Pursue—bring Hali back!

ALMEIDA.

Which was his course?

DAMARAL.

He's gone to the Grand-Master—
 Fly, and o'ertake him ere he reach the palace.
 If thou dost love me let him not escape.
 Away, away! [*Exit Almeida.*]
 (To Ismena) Thou leagued for my destruction?

ISMENA.

Hear me, and, if it yet be not too late,
 Let me preserve thee.—I'm combin'd with these,

Who, knowing thee impetuous, brave and honest,
 Form'd their infernal project to undo thee.
 Hali devis'd the plan ; his was the task
 To work upon thy passions, and incite thee
 To join against thy country : me they chose,
 Detested preference ! to seduce thy heart—

DAMARAL.

No more !—I cannot speak to thee !—Could'st thou—

ISMENA.

I knew thee not, had never felt thy kindness ;
 But now my heart acknowledges thy worth,
 And I would save thee if I can from ruin.

DAMARAL.

Thou know'st not half the dreadful guilt, in which
 Thy practice hath involv'd me.

ISMENA.

Hear me yet !

Thus, on my knees, let me implore thy pity !
 If penitence can find forgiveness from thee,
 If tears can move thee !—I may save thee yet.

DAMARAL.

Leave me—nay, leave me—I can't speak to thee—
 Oh beauteous falsehood !—Hence, I would not harm thee,
 For I have lov'd thee—lov'd thee, while thou spread'st
 Snares for my life and fame.—I may be tempted,
 If thou stay'st longer—hence !

ISMENA.

Oh ! for thine honour—

DAMARAL.

Honour !—mine honour !—To a treach'rous slave
Have I surrendered that !—Oh fool, fool, fool !—
But I shall reach him !—Bar not thus my way !

ISMENA.

Oh grant me hearing !

DAMARAL.

Vain are all your arts !
They've work'd—they cannot ruin me again !

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in Damaral's Palace.

Enter Damaral.

DAMARAL.

ALMEIDA come not yet !—I cannot bear
This ling'ring torture.—To pursue the villain
E'en now I tried, but shame and conscience struck me,
And drove me back.—I'm fallen abject low,
To skulk and tremble with a traitor's fear !

Enter Almeida.

How now ?—Hast dragg'd him hither ?

ALMEIDA.

No, my lord.

DAMARAL.

Then thou hast slain him ?

ALMEIDA.

Slain him ? Good my lord,
You talk'd not of his death : you bad me seek him,
And to our sov'reign's palace we pursued him.

He had been there—

DAMARAL.

Had been?—Where is he now?

ALMEIDA.

After a brief and private conference
With our new ruler, he again went forth,
And hasten'd tow'ards the bastion of Auvergne.

DAMARAL.

Why cam'st thou back? Why did'st thou not pursue him?

ALMEIDA.

I sent some followers after him, instructed
Without delay to bring him to thy presence,
Whilst I return'd to tell thee what had pass'd:
But, as he went in diligence, 'tis likely
He may, ere they could reach him, have gone forth.

DAMARAL.

'Tis well.—I would be private.— [*Exit Almeida.*

Gone forth, said he?

Why aye—it may be—nay, it must be so.
What should prevent him, licens'd as he was,
Bearing commission too from Villiers' self?
Beyond all doubt he's gone, and all is safe.—
Safe?—Oh no, no! What can be safe, when thus
I have committed honour, fame, and conscience
To a perfidious slave?—Say he were true,
Secret as Erebus, that in the caves

Of dark unfathom'd ocean my offence
 Were buried instantly, though from the world
 My shame may be conceal'd, can I—oh thought
 Destructive of my peace!—Can I e'er silence
 Th'upbraiding monitor, which to my soul
 Will speak the fatal truth?—Blush, Damaral, blush!
 Seek out some far sequester'd nook, where ne'er
 Can penetrate the eye or reach the voice
 Of mortal man; there shroud thy shame, there shrink
 From conscious guilt—Who's that?—What brings thee here?

Enter Ismena.

ISMENA.

If to thy presence thus I come uncall'd,
 'Tis as a penitent to ask forgiveness.
 Oh! could'st thou know the workings of my soul—

DAMARAL.

I am more calm than when I parted from thee,
 But dare not trust myself to look upon thee.
 Thy mask of candour is not now more fair,
 Than it was erst, when, false and treacherous,
 Thou stung'st the bosom that had shelter'd thee.

ISMENA.

I wear that mask no longer. No! for ever
 I cast away disguise, and dare be honest.
 Oh gracious Damaral! if thy noble heart
 Be open to sweet mercy, hear my story,

And, though thou may'st not pardon, pity me!
 Torn from the guardians of my early youth,
 Within the walls of a seraglio rear'd,
 I learnt no arts but those which pleasure taught,
 And was enjoin'd no duty but obedience.
 My sov'reign's will became his servant's law:
 When he ordain'd to send me forth to prove thee,
 I deem'd myself distinguish'd by his choice;
 But, when I knew thee, when I found thee noble,
 And grac'd with each heroic quality,
 Which can exalt the man or deck the soldier,
 My soul revolted at the foul design;
 Virtue resum'd her empire o'er my heart,
 And urg'd me to confess my fault and save thee.

DAMARAL.

I lov'd thee once—I will not chide thee now:
 And he, whose peace thou'st ruin'd, thus forgives thee!
 The heart, which can resist thy pow'rful pleadings,
 Is more or less than human.

ISMENA.

Gen'rous man!

Is my fault pardon'd?—Witness, righteous heav'n!
 And bless me as my penitence is true!

Enter Almeida.

ALMEIDA.

The council is conven'd. On urgent matters

Thy presence is requir'd.

DAMARAL.

Know'st thou if Hali

Be yet come back?

ALMEIDA.

As he went forth to treat

On business of grave import, 'tis unlikely

He should return so quickly.

DAMARAL.

Thou hast reason.

Report that instantly I will attend them. [*Exit Almeida.*]

Farewell, Ismena! let no recollection

Of former errors pang thy feeling breast.

I have forgotten them.

ISMENA.

My heart's too full

To thank thee as I ought. May ev'ry blessing

Light on thee and preserve thee!—But beware—

Beware of Hali! [*Excunt severally.*]

SCENE II.

Council Chamber.

Enter Du Mesnil and Garcias.

DU MESNIL.

Garcias! well met.—Know'st thou why thus we're
summon'd?

GARCIAS.

Since last we here assembled, I've not heard
That aught important has occur'd. Perhaps
The captive, whom our chief sent forth to treat
With Mustapha, has brought an answer back.
But see the noble Damaral.

Enter Damaral.

We discuss'd

The cause why our Grand-Master hath conven'd us.
We deem'd it might be, that the captive, charg'd
To bear his answer to the Turkish camp—

DAMARAL.

Is he return'd?

GARCIAS.

Nay, if thou know'st it not,
It surely cannot be.

DU MESNIL.

Whate'er the cause,
We now shall learn it, for our chief approaches.

Enter Villiers, Raymond, and Davila.

Behold us here, obedient to thy pleasure :
Vouchsafe to instruct us wherefore thus we meet.

VILLIERS.

The cause of meeting soon shall be detail'd.
At this eventful period, ev'ry moment
Teems with new circumstances, which demand

Our vigilant attention.

DU MESNIL.

True—the times

Are critical : we cannot be too cautious.

We have to deal with those, who scruple not
To use all means which may effect their ends.

VILLIERS.

We are aware of that, and therefore seek
To counteract their plans. Yet 'tis not easy,
Whate'er our caution be, to guard against
Our foe's insidious projects. Proteus like,
They can assume variety of shapes,
And mould themselves to what may best conduce
To work their purposes.—When I reflect
On the important trust we gave that captive,
Methinks we should have ponder'd more upon it.
We acted hastily. Yet had we cause, (*to Damaral*).
For thou wert satisfied he was trust-worthy.

DAMARAL.

I deem'd him so—

VILLIERS.

'Twas a sufficient sanction.

Had'st thou much converse with him ?

DAMARAL.

Converse?—Yes,

We talk'd—He was an inmate in my house,

And so we had discourse.—He seem'd a man
Of more than ordinary depth of thought,
And well matur'd reflection.

VILLIERS.

May we ask,
If thou intrusted'st him with aught beyond
The limited instruction which we gave him?

DAMARAL.

I?—Good my lord! I have not seen him since.
Went he not straightway forth?—Is he return'd?

DAVILA.

If yet thou hast not heard, I may perchance
Impart some tidings of him. I and Raymond
Were station'd at the bastion of Auvergne,
When towards our post the trusty captive came.
He seem'd in haste, yet could I not avoid
With courteous salutation to accost him.
As we convers'd, certain of thy dependents
In haste came up. When they could find their speech,
They told him thou had'st need of him; but he,
Regardless of them, with more eagerness,
Insisted on his passage through the gate.

DAMARAL.

Thou did'st accord it?

DAVILA.

I had nearly done so;

But, on reflection thou might'st have strong cause
To stop his progress, I oppos'd his wishes.

DAMARAL.

What right had'st thou—

DAVILA.

I pray thee give me hearing,
My tale is nearly ended. He, indignant
That thus I barr'd his way, pushed on. A contest rose.
I know not what the issue might have been,
For he is strong and pow'rful, had not chance
By a propitious turn concluded it.
As we stood grappling, from his bosom fell
A signet—

DAMARAL.

How?—What say'st?

DAVILA.

Thine own—I knew it.
The symbol of a trust. What trust it were,
I guess'd our chieftain here might choose to know,
And therefore deem'd it right to arrest the bearer,
As I do thee. [*He lays hold on Damaral.*]

DAMARAL.

Hold off thy hands! Release me!

VILLIERS.

Let not respect be wanting to the man,
Whose services our Order has experienc'd.

(*To Damaral*)—Prove as it may th'event, of this be sure,
 Before suspicion can affect thy fame,
 We must have weighty proof of thine offence.
 Thy judges are the partners of thy glory,
 They fought beneath thy banners, and partook
 Of thy well-earn'd renown : as their own honour
 They cherish thine ; and, when they judge thy cause,
 The recollection of thy past deserts
 Will plead for thee more loudly in their hearts,
 Than if a venal host of bold declaimers
 Should advocate thine innocence.—Bring forth
 The captive whom ye have in charge !

Enter Hali, guarded.

Stand forward !

Here, in this noble presence, art thou brought
 To answer for thyself. Suspicious strong
 Attach upon thee : yet, to save thyself,
 Dare not—

HALI.

Thou may'st thine exhortation spare ;
 I know my life is forfeit to thy pow'r,
 And scorn to save it by a mean evasion.
 I stand prepar'd to answer, as becomes
 A man disdainful of his fate.

VILLIERS.

'Tis well.

Whose was the signet, that we found upon thee ?

HALI—(*Pointing to Damaral*).

'Twas his—intrusted to me by himself.

VILLIERS.

And with what motive ?

HALI.

Give me leave awhile.

Had I been one of those, whose tim'rous spirit
Shrank from th' approach of danger, I had not,
As I have done, affronted sure destruction.
Ye may believe me, for I care not now
Who knows my character. Let others pardon :
In the recesses of my soul I lodge
The wrongs I suffer ; there I brood upon them,
Foster their growth, wait for the fav'ring moment
Which gives me 'vantage, while, meantime, with smiles
And courteous bearing I amuse my victim,
'Till my avenging dagger drinks his blood.

VILLIERS.

Methinks thou paint'st a fiend, and not a man.

HALI.

It matters not what title it deserves :
I speak it of myself.

VILLIERS.

Come to the point,
Nor further waste our time in vain discourse.

HALI.

It was not vain discourse, to shew the springs
Which mov'd my conduct.—Let me now proceed,
And let the stern and haughty Damaral hear.
Hopes of high retribution from your foes,
And deeply-rankling hatred of himself,
Led me, of risk disdainful, to devise
The means of his and Rhodes's overthrow.

DAMARAL.

Hatred of me?—What means he?—Until now
He knew me not.

HALI.

Thou knew'st not me, 'twas plain;
But I knew thee, and had strong cause to know.
Remember'st thou Velasquez, who once serv'd
Beneath thy banner, whom thy harsh controul
Compell'd to leave the service of the Order,
And, robb'd of ev'ry hope of fair ambition,
Elsewhere to seek his fortune?

DAMARAL.

Who?—Velasquez?—
Such man I think there was—

HALI.

Such man there is—
Behold him here before thee!

DAMARAL.

Heav'n and earth !
Am I so caught ? So basely, blindly caught ?

HALI.

Thou art !—And yet my triumph is not full.
Thyself, thy fame, are prostrate at my feet :
But, had I reach'd the Turkish camp, the fall
Of Rhodes's self had dwindled thine to nothing.
This fate denied me ; but enough remains.
I found thee deck'd with honour and renown ;
I wrought upon thy vanity and passion,
I led thee to conspiracy and treason,
And now I leave thee to contempt and shame !

VILLIERS.

Prevent his further speech ! (*The guards seize Hali.*
(*To Damaral.*)—Th' atrocious slanders
Of this convicted traitor can't affect
Our confidence in thy long-honour'd worth.
I marvel not, that thus to be arraign'd
By one, who has avow'd his hatred to thee,
Should for a moment shake thy constancy.
A soldier's choicest treasure is his fame ;
And who so well can estimate its value,
As he whose fame all others has surpass'd ?
The short-liv'd triumph of malevolence
Will but enhance thy glory. Speak, and meet

His foul and daring charge with full reply.

DAMARAL.

Thrice noble prince ! And ye, illustrious knights,
Once my companions in the toils of war,
Now here assembled to pronounce my doom,
That from my soul I thank ye for your candour,
That (*to Villiers*) had I known thy nobleness and worth,
I had not wish'd to injure thee, believe.
Ye bid me justify myself, and promise
Such fair construction as my words deserve.
There was a time, when gladly I had seiz'd
Such fair occasion to release myself
From charges, which, to honourable minds,
Are worse than death. I had not waited then,
But, with the promptitude of innocence,
Boldly repell'd the voice of calumny.
Such time is pass'd !

VILLIERS.

Is past ?—Nay, noble Damaral !
Forget not thus thyself.

DAMARAL.

Could I forget
Myself, and the transactions of this day,
I might obey thee.—Memory is too busy.
My bold accuser spoke the truth. He wrought
Upon my senseless vanity and passion,

He led me to conspiracy and treason,
Robb'd me of fame, and plung'd me in dishonour!

Enter Ismena, struggling with the Guards.

ISMENA.

Stand off! prevent me not!—I will have passage!

[She throws herself at the feet of Villiers.]

Oh noble sir!

VILLIERS.

What mean'st thou?—Lady, rise—

This attitude becomes thee not.

ISMENA.

No, no!

Here let me prostrate fall, here, at thy feet,

Let me confess my shame, t'atone for crimes

By blackest villainy devis'd, and plead

For him, whose gen'rous, unsuspecting nature—

VILLIERS.

Retire—we have no time to hear thee now.

ISMENA.

In mercy send me not unheard away!

I plead not for myself—I am unworthy.

Oh! pour your vengeance on my guilty head,

Rack, if you will, the fatal form which 'snar'd him—

VILLIERS.

I may not hear thee more.—Thou must retire—

ISMENA.

Oh never, never !—(*runs to Damaral*)—Dear, ill-fated
Damaral !

Canst thou forgive me ?

DAMARAL.

This is not the moment,
To give free utterance to my lab'ring thought.
I have forgiven thee—nay more, believe,
While this heart beats, or while this working brain
Retains the mem'ry of what most I lov'd,
Thou shalt be there.—But thou must now retire.
Should we not meet again—

ISMENA.

Not meet again !

(*To Villiers*) If ye have hearts, oh ! send me not away—

VILLIERS.

We shew most pity, in preventing thee
From torturing a mind, already loaded
With more than human fortitude can bear.
Du Mesnil ! lead her hence.

ISMENA.

A moment yet—

A little moment.—I have much to say,
Ere this poor suff'ring heart with sorrow breaks !

DAMARAL.

Nay, nay, unman me not.—May angels guard thee !

VILLIERS.

Bear her away!

[*Exeunt Ismena and Du Mesnil.*]

That an event, so novel in our Order,
 So dreadful in itself and consequences,
 Should strike you, noble comrades! with dismay,
 I cannot marvel. 'Mongst yourselves resolve
 What course we should adopt. But for this wretch,
 This trait'rous renegado from our faith,
 Whose foul contrivance has seduc'd a spirit
 Once our support and pride, what else for him
 Remains, but instant death?

HALI.

(*Breaking from the guards*) Unhand me, ruffians!—
 Give vengeance her free scope! I fear it not.
 Whate'er my life, whatever were my crimes,
 My death is glorious. Think ye I will plead
 For mercy or remission of my tortures?
 No! though Velasquez be your victim, still
 He triumphs in his fate, and scorns your pow'r.
 Draw forth your murd'rous instruments; devise
 New punishments my constancy to prove:
 I'm arm'd against them all. From ev'ry vein
 The life-blood may distil; the ling'ring rack
 May multiply the agonies of death:
 Amid them all, this cheering thought remains—

Ye can't bereave me of accomplish'd vengeance !

VILLIERS.

Away with him !

[*Exit Hali, guarded.*]

Now comes the painful task,

By stern necessity impos'd upon us—

DAVILA.

Your pardon, noble sir ! My heart is full,
 And feelings irresistible incite me
 To speak the honest dictates of my soul.
 While unacquainted with the gen'rous nature
 Of this brave knight, I censur'd his demeanour,
 And, with an earnestness I now regret,
 Pursued him to the ruin of his fame.
 I knew not then the sum of his desert :
 But, when I see him with sublime disdain
 Reject all subterfuge, when pow'ful truth
 Impels him to avow a secret crime
 Charg'd on him by the single testimony
 Of a malignant and revengeful foe,
 I feel and own his honour. Let me plead
 In his defence, whom lately I accus'd,
 And, trusting to the nobleness of those
 Who guide our Order's councils, hope for mercy.

VILLIERS.

We all must feel like thee. In ev'ry bosom
 Remembrance lives of his recorded worth,

And justice shall by mercy be attemper'd.
 Meantime—(to *Damaral*)—while undecided is thy cause,
 Thou must to Raymond render up thy sword.

DAMARAL.

Were ye to judge me as I judge myself,
 Your course had been far other.—Ere I leave you,
 Take for your noble clemency my thanks.
 Wer't not for that which rankles in my heart,
 And turns to mortal poison the blest mercy,
 Which, when it shews me what I might have been,
 Doubles my shame and sorrow, I might prize
 A life, which now no more is worth my care.
 But I too long detain you. What remains
 Will soon be past. I must resign my sword. (*Takes it off.*)
 Yet, ere we part, let me again survey
 That blade (*half draws it*), whose edge with destination sure
 Oft bore destruction 'mid our Order's foes.
 Thou wert my trusty friend; thou ne'er deceiv'st me—
 I then was not unworthy to possess thee.
 What's that?—a tear?—and from thy master's eye?
 I will not wipe it off—it shall remain.
 Excuse me, sirs! ye've all been witnesses
 What this good sword has done (*draws it*). It serv'd me once
 To gain an ample harvest of renown,
 Nor now deserts me in adversity.

[*He stabs himself.*]

VILLIERS.

Prevent his rash attempt!

DAMARAL.

It is too late.

[He falls.]

Farewell!—when my offences shall be told,

Be it remember'd that I made atonement.

(To Villiers) Give me thy hand—forget—forgive me—oh!*[He dies.]*

THE END.

THE
ADVERTISEMENT.

A COMEDY.

IN THREE ACTS.

Des chicaneurs viendront nous manger jusqu'à l'âme,
Et nous ne dirons mot ?

RACINE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SYDENHAM.

DANVERS.

HARCOURT.

COGNÓVIT.

LATITAT.

BOTHERUM.

MRS. DANVERS.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

PEGGY.

Servants, &c.

Scene—Paddington.

THE
ADVERTISEMENT.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Mr. Cognovit's Study.

Enter Cognovit, in dressing-gown and slippers, looking at his watch.

COGNOVIT.

I protest its eight o'clock, and Latitat's not come yet. Surely he might have reach'd Paddington before this time. I warrant me my ward Harry Danvers was quicker in his motions, when he brush'd off for Gretna Green with neighbour Sydenham's daughter—he was brisk enough, I'll answer for't. Plague on him! we shall have him back again, to call me to an account for the

arrears of his minority. An ugly business that—I have nothing for it but that strange clause in his father's will, disinheriting him in case of his marrying contrary to—aye, that will do, if we can but find out this Marianne Beaufort.—It was a good thought of mine to advertise for her.—What can that Latitat be about?—Oh! you are come at last—[*Enter Latitat.*—Well, has any body answer'd our advertisement?

LATITAT.

Egad! you're in luck. The trap was no sooner set, than in pounc'd—who do you think now?

COGNOVIT.

I can't guess.

LATITAT.

How should you?—The game's in our own hand, old boy—I have her as safe as wax.

COGNOVIT.

Have whom?

LATITAT.

Why the old gentlewoman, and Miss Marianne herself.

COGNOVIT.

The deuce you have!

LATITAT.

I've that within that passes shew, as the man in the play says.—You shall know all about it.—As I was sitting all alone by myself in the office yesterday evening,

there comes a loud rat-tat at the door, and in bounc'd a flaming fine lady—

COGNOVIT.

Aye!—Who was she?

LATITAT.

You shall hear.—Lend me your ears, as the man in the play says—

COGNOVIT.

That's rather an unlucky quotation for us gentlemen of Furnival's-Inn—

LATITAT.

Egad! so it is.—There's no joking about that.—Well, as I was saying, the gentlewoman began about the advertisement; she seem'd a queer sort of a body too, and spoke in a kind of foreign outlandish lingo as it were—

COGNOVIT.

But what did she say?

LATITAT.

I'll tell you.—Would you believe it? Why, sir, she's neither more nor less than Madam Mactavish, widow of Ronald Mactavish, of Drummanagriskin Castle in Clackmannanshire, Esq., and own natural aunt to Miss Marianne herself.

COGNOVIT.

That's news indeed.

LATITAT.

Aye, so you may say. So, sir, she went on, and told me all about old Beaufort; how that his wife was her own sister, and how he and said wife were dead; and how, out of nothing else but kindness, she had taken their orphan daughter, meaning said Marianne, to the manor-house of Drummanagriskin aforesaid.

COGNOVIT.

And where is she now?

LATITAT.

You shall hear.—So she said, that some business having call'd her to London, she had brought said Marianne with her.

COGNOVIT.

What! Is she actually in London?

LATITAT.

No.—What would you think now if she was in this house?

COGNOVIT.

Can it be possible?

LATITAT.

True as you stand there. She and the old gentlewoman are at this moment below stairs in the parlour.

COGNOVIT.

I'll go down to them directly.

LATITAT.

What! in this trim? Best make yourself look a little more genteeler first; clap on a coat and wig before you wait upon ladies.

COGNOVIT.

I believe you are right. I'll get ready immediately. In the mean time, do you go down and keep them company. Order some chocolate.

LATITAT.

Let me alone—I can do the genteel thing, I warrant me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

*Cognovit's Parlour.**Mrs. Mactavish, in weeds as a widow, and Peggy.*

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Noo, Paggy, ye've gotten yeer instructions parfec, I hope. Dinna ye forget ye are Miss Mawrienne Beaufort.

PEGGY.

Never you fear me, I'm up to all that. But stay—what's it I'm to call you?—The deuce of a name, I know it is.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Wull I ne'er din it untill yeer stupid heed? Dinna ye ken I'm noo Maistress Mactavish, o' Drummanagriskin Castle?

PEGGY.

Oh! aye—Drummanagriskin Castle.—What a funny name!

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Troth, the name's weel eneugh, gin ye but mind it. And tak heed, lassie, ye munna caw me mither, but awnt, mind ye.

PEGGY.

I warrant you. But law! here's the fine gemman again.—

Enter Latitat.

LATITAT.

Ah, ladies! left all alone to indulge in your own contemplashins? My worthy friend, Ephraim Cognovit, Esquire, is just slipping on his wig, and making himself a little decentish, to do himself the honour to kiss your hands, as the French say—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

I hope Maister Cognovit wull nae inconvenience himsel.

PEGGY.

(*Examining the china on the mantle-piece.*)—Law, mother!

MRS. MACTAVISH.

What's that ye say, mess?—Caw me mither indeed!

PEGGY.

I did'nt mean no harm.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Wha ever heard sic a mistake?

LATITAT.

Lord, ma'am, 'twas nothing on the face of the earth
but a lapsus linguæ—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Lopsus linguæ? May I speer the meaning o' the term?

LATITAT.

Its a sort of a kind of a foreign—you understand
French, ladies?

MRS. MACTAVISH.

I canna aver we do, sir.

LATITAT.

No? Then, ma'am, it's a French phrase, just im-
ported, and as yet only us'd by persons of the first qua-
lity.—T'won't reach Scotland these six months.

PEGGY.

Law! how fine it must be to know all these quality
phrases, as you call 'em.—I wish you'd teach me some
of 'em, sir.

LATITAT.

With the greatest pleasure in life, miss. There's nar-
row a gemman in town knows 'em better nor I.

PEGGY.

Thank you, sir.—(*Aside*)—What a charming man!—
(*To him*)—When will you begin, sir?

LATITAT.

Whenever you please. I'm always at the service of the ladies, particularly when they are pretty ones like you.

PEGGY.

You're monsous polite, sir.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Hoot awa, lassie, wha bids ye speak?

PEGGY.

Can't you have done? You're always snubbing one before company! What must the genaman think?

LATITAT.

Can you doubt, Miss Marianne, about my thoughts, when you are their object?

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Dinna ye flatter, dinna ye bamboozle the peur bairn—

LATITAT.

I flatter! I bamboozle!

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ah, maister Latitat! ye've sic an insinuating tongue!

LATITAT.

No, miss—Larceny Latitat never says nothing he won't swear to.—Zounds! here's old Cognovit—I'll tell you more another time, miss—

PEGGY.

Whenever you please, sir, and welcome.—(*Aside*)—Never set my eyes on a more genteeler man!

Enter Cognovit.

LATITAT.

Madam, give me leave to present to you my worthy friend Mr. Cognovit.—Mr. Cognovit, this here lady is Madam Mactavish, of Drummanagriskin Castle, n Clack—Clack—Where the deuce is it, ma'am?

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Clackmannanshire, sir.—Maister Cognovit, I'm unco happy to see you, sir.

COGNOVIT.

Your la'ship does honour to my humble roof.—Miss Marianne, I presume—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

(*To Peggy, who is talking with Latitat.*)—Mawrienne, what gars ye keep i' th' back groond? Come forward, lassie, and mak your compliment untill maister Cognovit—(*Peggy advances awkwardly.*)—She's sae hashfu, maister Cognovit.—The peur bairn is nae accustom'd to new acquaintances; but she's a sonsie lassie, as ye'll find when ye ken her better.

COGNOVIT.

I trust, madam, you have evidence enough to substantiate her claim to the property in question.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ye may rest satisfied o' that. That's a matter which I wull be happy to discuss wi' you.

COGNOVIT.

I rejoice to hear it ; because, madam, if you and I can come to a right understanding on the business, I flatter myself I may have it in my power to put young miss there in possession of a large fortune.

PEGGY.

Dear ! how pure that will be.—But sir, do tell me—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Wha bids ye speak, mess ? Dinna ye ken that young ladies should na be sae forward ?

PEGGY.

Mayn't I ask the gemman a civil question ?—I only wish'd to know—(*To Latitat*)—Won't you hear me, sir ?—

LATITAT.

To be sure, miss.—Contrive to get away from these here old fograms, and let's fetch a walk together in the garden—

PEGGY.

Let me alone.—(*To Mrs. Mactavish*)—Well, since you'll have it all your own way, I'll leave you to settle the business between you, and fetch a walk in the garden.—(*To Latitat*)—Wo'n't you go with me, sir ?

LATITAT.

With the greatest pleasure, miss—and I'll shew you the fishpond, and the harbour, and the obelisk.

COGNOVIT.

Suppose we let the young people amuse themselves, madam, while we talk over our business? I have some papers in my study, which it is proper you should see.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Weel, gang your gait, ye twa daftie cheels—see ye keep oot o' harm's way.—Maister Cognovit, I'm ready to attend ye.

COGNOVIT.

The honour of your la'ship's hand—

[*Exeunt Cognovit and Mrs. Mactavish.*]

PEGGY.

Didn't I tell you how I'd fetch 'em up?

LATITAT.

You're an adorable creature!—(*Aside*)—Now, Larceny Latitat, mind your hits! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

Apartment in Mr. Sydenham's House.

Enter Sydenham.

SYDENHAM.

That I should have liv'd to these years to be plagued with a runaway daughter!—To scamper off to Gretna Green indeed!—Who the deuce is this Harry Danvers?—I once had an old friend of that name—but no matter—I should not have so much minded it, if it had not inter-

rupted me in the course of my agricultural experiments—a gipsy!—after toiling and broiling for seventeen years in Barbadoes to make a fortune for her—after buying this elegant *ferme ornée* at Paddington—after being chosen a member of the Agricultural Society—

Enter Botherum.

BOTHERUM.

Please your honour, I've such a thing to tell you—

SYDENHAM.

Is any intelligence come of them?

BOTHERUM.

That there is—but it's no fault of mine—I couldn't help it—

SYDENHAM.

Who says you could?

BOTHERUM.

They're off!

SYDENHAM.

I've known that this week past, you blockhead.

BOTHERUM.

This week past? Why they went off only this morning.

SYDENHAM.

I tell you they went off last Friday.

BOTHERUM.

—Lord! help your honour! They went off just before daybreak. So Kit Kettle the travelling tinker says.

SYDENHAM.

Kit Kettle the travelling tinker?—What the deuce can he know about them? Who are off?

BOTHERUM.

Why the two Leicestershire oxen have broke down your new patent paling—

SYDENHAM.

The two oxen gone! The patent paling broke! Was ever any thing so unfortunate!

BOTHERUM.

Deadly unfortunate indeed!

SYDENHAM.

What have you done about the patent paling?

BOTHERUM.

Please your honour, I thought the best way was—

SYDENHAM.

And who's gone after the oxen?

BOTHERUM.

Why, as there was no time to be lost—

Enter Simon.

SIMON.

Here's one to wait on your honour.

SYDENHAM.

What does he want?

SIMON.

He says he be cumm'd to tell your honour summut about your lost sheep.

SYDENHAM.

Lost oxen, you mean, blockhead! Shew him in—
[Exit Simon.]—Go, Botherum, set about the paling immediately. I'll let you know about the oxen, as soon as I have seen this person.

[Exit Botherum.]

Enter Harcourt and Simon.

SIMON.

Here's one as calls himself Muster Harcourt to wait on your honour.

[Exit Simon.]

HARCOURT.

You may perhaps be surpriz'd, Sir, that a total stranger should take the liberty of waiting upon you—

SYDENHAM.

Not in the least, sir; you need make no apology. I take it very kindly of you. You may easily guess that I feel a degree of anxiety. The thing was perfectly unexpected—

HARCOURT.

It must be confess'd that their leaving you so abruptly was enough to ruffle you at the moment—

SYDENHAM.

To be sure it would have been better if they had scamper'd off a little more quietly. They might have let the poor patent paling alone—

HARCOURT.

The patent paling! What had they to do with that?

SYDENHAM.

Nay, I don't know; but some how or other they manag'd to break it down.

HARCOURT.

That's a circumstance I was not appriz'd of. But, sir, I trust the nobleness of your nature will not suffer you to abandon them.

SYDENHAM.

By no manner of means.

HARCOURT.

I am rejoic'd to hear you say so. You will then suffer them to return?

SYDENHAM.

Nothing on earth could give me greater pleasure.

HARCOURT.

Excellently said. They are indeed deserving of the solicitude which you express for their recovery.

SYDENHAM.

I perfectly agree with you. They are indeed two noble creatures.

HARCOURT.

They are so.

SYDENHAM.

In every point about them, not to be match'd by any thing in England—

HARCOURT.

True.

SYDENHAM.

In shape, colour, and size, equal to any thing that ever came out of Leicestershire—

HARCOURT.

Sir!

SYDENHAM.

And as for capability of fattening—

HARCOURT.

Fattening, sir!

SYDENHAM.

Sam Slaughter the butcher says they may be brought up to better than fourscore stone a piece.

HARCOURT.

For heav'n's sake, sir, what do you mean? Sam Slaughter the butcher and fourscore stone a piece! Why you talk of them as if they were a couple of oxen.

SYDENHAM.

Well, sir, and how else should I talk of them?

HARCOURT.

Sir, whatever you may think of it, you'll give me leave to tell you, that a friend of mine is not to be spoken of in that manner.

SYDENHAM.

A friend of your's, sir? If you call a horn'd beast your friend, sir—

HARCOURT.

Nay, sir, an insinuation of that nature implies such an insensibility—so perfect a relinquishment of all feeling—

SYDENHAM.

Zounds! sir, what is it you mean?

HARCOURT.

I have done with you, sir. But in spite of you, sir, the fair fugitive—

SYDENHAM.

Fair, sir? They are both jet black.

HARCOURT.

Not so black, sir, as the heart that dares insinuate aught against their fair fame.—Renounce them if you will, but don't attempt to undervalue them—

SYDENHAM.

I undervalue them! Are you out of your senses?

HARCOURT.

Sir, though you treat them in this way, there are persons enough who will gladly receive them—

SYDENHAM.

Are there?

HARCOURT.

I myself will take them—

SYDENHAM.

You will? I am glad you give me notice of your intention. Touch a hair of them if you dare. I'll teach you to meddle with my property!

HARCOURT.

Your property! The law has put an end to it. They are both of an age—

SYDENHAM.

They were six years old last grass—

HARCOURT.

And what is more, sir, they have been legally married.

SYDENHAM.

Why who the deuce are you talking about?

HARCOURT.

Of whom, sir, should I talk, but of your amiable daughter and my worthy friend, Harry Danvers?

SYDENHAM.

Bless my soul! I ask you ten thousand pardons—I have made the strangest mistake. To confess the truth, I had just heard of the loss of two Leicestershire oxen—I am infinitely sorry, good sir—

HARCOURT.

There's not the least occasion for apology. As we have at last come to a right understanding, I presume that my interference in behalf of the young couple will not prove ineffectual. Your lovely daughter—

SYDENHAM.

Ah! sir, her behaviour has been—

HARCOURT.

Did you know my friend Danvers, you would perhaps think more favourably of it. I am ambitious, sir, of introducing him to your acquaintance. His character is unimpeachable, his disposition amiable, and in point of fortune—

SYDENHAM.

Pray what may his circumstances be?

HARCOURT.

He has upwards of four thousand a year, and asks nothing from you, except your permission to pay his respects to you as your son-in-law. Take my word for it, your daughter might have done worse.

SYDENHAM.

Sir, if he be such as you describe him, it is impossible she should have done better. I never was more pleas'd in my life. Four thousand a year—no fortune with the girl!—They may come whenever they please.

HARCOURT.

Then, sir, they will be here immediately.—I hasten to announce to them your kind wishes.

SYDENHAM.

Take some little refreshment before you go, good Mr. Harcourt.

HARCOURT.

I thank you, sir, but you must allow me to relieve their anxiety—you may expect them immediately—good morning—no ceremony—

SYDENHAM.

Nay, you must give me leave to wait on you to the door. You have made me the happiest man in England, Mr. Harcourt ! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

Cognovit's Study.

Cognovit and Mrs. Mactavish sitting at a Table covered with Papers.

COGNOVIT.

You perceive, madam, from these papers, how the matter stands. Young Danvers, by marrying Miss Sydenham, has absolutely forfeited his estate. The clause in his father's will is positive.—“ If my said son, Henry “ Danvers, shall marry any one except said Marianne “ Beaufort, said Marianne being living and single at

“ the time of said marriage, then all my said devis’d
 “ property shall go to and be vested in the said Mari-
 “ anne”—Nothing can be more clear than that Miss
 Marianne is entitled to inherit.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

’Tis varra perspicuous; the ainly difficulty wull be hoo
 to inforce the clause—(*she rises*)—’Tis there the matter
 penches.

COGNOVIT (*rises*).

Nothing can exceed the justness of that observation.
 That old Sydenham will be a difficult chap to deal with.
 You must have all your wits about you—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Waes me, maister Cognovit, what wull I do wi’ sic a
 pawky airtfu’ cheel? Alas! I’m a widow wumman, aw
 alane i’ the world, wha has nae freend in these parts to
 stand by her, and back her against sic a pow’rfu’ anta-
 gonist. Waes me that I ha’ nae freend!

COGNOVIT.

Nay, madam, be not affected thus. You doubtless
 must be in affluent circumstances—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Troth am I. My gued man was unco careful’ o’ my
 interests. As we had nae issue of oor marriage, and as
 he minded na his collaterals, he added to my tocher
 Drummanagaskin castle, and aw his personale—

COGNOVIT.

That must be altogether very considerable, I should suppose.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

In gued troth ye may say that. There's nae lady in aw Clackmannanshire, wha can compete wi' me. I ha' the blessing o' independence, maister Cognovit, but alas! I find myself a peur lone wumman—

COGNOVIT.

A very lamentable situation, indeed! Poor dear lady! I don't wonder you find yourself at a loss. A rich widow, madam, like yourself, is a mark for all the world to aim at; she's like a flying fish, pursued by every one in the water, and, if she ventures into the air, pounc'd up before she knows where she is.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Yeer similitude is varra correct. But alas! what can a peur widow wumman do, maister Cognovit?

COGNOVIT.

Why in my mind, madam, there is but one course for her to take.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

And pray ye, maister Cognovit, what may that be?

COGNOVIT.

To look out for a husband, madam; a steady, sensible, experienc'd man, who understands business—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ah! maister Cognovit, its nae sic easy matter—

COGNOVIT.

Excuse me, madam; there are men to be found. Set the case now, madam, that a hale, vigorous, middle-ag'd gentleman, a warm man, madam, who has a good business to his back, and some thousands in his pocket, who has penetration to discover your perfections, and ability to protect you against all the world—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ah! where wull I meet wi' sic a blessing!

COGNOVIT.

If, madam, Ephraim Cognovit may dare to aspire—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

The poors be gued unto me! Ye, maister Cognovit!
—Gin indeed I thought ye were sincere—

COGNOVIT.

Talk not of sincerity, madam. If I could rip up my heart and lay it at your feet, you would read engrav'd on it in capital letters your own adorable name. Thus, madam, let me fall at your feet and swear—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ah! dinna ye sweer—I would nae doubt yere integrity; but ye men are aw deceivers—ye tak a pride in gaining oor peur hearts—

COGNOVIT.

Give me but your's, madam, let me but obtain your hand, I will insure you. No one shall strike you but through your Cognovit's heart.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ye've sic a persuawsive way wi' ye! Ye can flatter I find—

COGNOVIT.

Look you, madam, I'll come to the point at once. I am a man, madam, who have thriven in the world, and am up as I may say to business. You, madam, are a very sensible woman; you have got a troublesome affair on your hands, the success of which depends solely on myself. I am your friend—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ye're unco gued, sir, to tak sic an interest—I canna tell hoo to prove my graatitude.

COGNOVIT.

Come, madam, this is losing time. Let us understand one another at once. Miss Marianne seems to be an inexperienced young thing—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Troth is she, a peur silly bairn—

COGNOVIT.

And, if I can judge from her appearance, rather dispos'd to have her own way in opposition to your's.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ye ha' hit the right nail o'the heed, tak my word for't.

COGNOVIT.

Now, if she should get hold of all this property—four thousand a year and the lord knows how much ready money—ten to one, you'll never be a farthing the better for it.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

She ! not a bawbie would she ever let me touch.—Ah ! ye dunna ken what a canker'd brat she is to deal wi' !

COGNOVIT.

If that is the case, I refer it to your own prudence, madam, to decide, whether it would not be wiser for you to keep the property in your own hands.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Gin that were possable—

COGNOVIT.

It's absolutely certain, if you give me the proper powers. Make me your husband, and every shilling of it shall be your own. It's all in my hands, to be transferred into your's if you please, and as for retaining possession—come, madam—this is too great a stake to be trifled with—time presses—not a moment to lose—we must strike while the iron is hot. The coach that brought you here is at the door—Miss Marianne is

luckily out of the way—in half an hour we shall get a licence at the Commons—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Y'ere sae pressing—I kenna what to say—what shall the world think o'me ?

COGNOVIT.

That you are a prudent woman—come, my dear madam, consider what you have at stake—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ah spare my blushes !—Ye ha' conquer'd !

COGNOVIT.

Let me then thus seal our contract !—(*Kisses her hand*).
—Come, sweet object of my amorous contemplations !

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ah ! there's nae withstanding ye !

COGNOVIT.

My adorable Mrs. Mactavish !

MRS. MACTAVISH.

My chairming maister Cognovit !

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

Apartment in Sydenham's House.

Enter Sydenham.

SYDENHAM.

Away, away, Simon—there's a carriage turn'd in at

the gate—it must be they—how my heart beats—I protest I'm in as great a flutter—here they come—

Enter Mr. and Mrs. Danvers and Harcourt.

Welcome, my dear girl—welcome, my dear boy—good Mr. Harcourt—

MRS. DANVERS.

Oh my dear father! Your kindness overpowers me. Can you forgive your Marianne?

SYDENHAM.

From the very bottom of my heart—but how could you think of doing such a thing?

MRS. DANVERS.

I have indeed been a sad naughty girl—but it was not all my fault—that gentleman was as much to blame as myself.

SYDENHAM.

Heyday! Here's a pretty beginning of matrimony—what! before the honeymoon's half over treat your husband so?

DANVERS.

She is quite right, sir. I plead guilty to the charge, and have nothing but my motive to offer as my apology; and this I am afraid will not give you a very favourable opinion of my modesty.

SYDENHAM.

Why, as to the modesty of your young fellows now-a-days, I don't think there's much to be said—

DANVERS.

Certainly, sir, much cannot be said in favour of mine; for I had determin'd that I never would marry, unless I felt assur'd that the lady look'd neither to rank nor riches from her connection with me, but should be influenc'd solely by her opinion of my individual merit.

SYDENHAM.

That certainly was carrying modesty almost as far as it can go; but pray, what evidence might you have of your having succeeded with this lady?

DANVERS.

The most positive and satisfactory, sir—her conviction that, when she took me, she took one who had no other pretensions to her favour, than a fair character, and some hopes of getting forward in the world by the assistance of his friends.

SYDENHAM.

What's that you say?—Mr. Harcourt, sir, I don't understand—

HARCOURT.

That certainly, sir, was the principle on which Mrs. Danvers acted.—(*To her*)—I am sure, madam, you will not disavow it.

MRS. DANVERS.

No, sir—it is my pride, my glory, to have acted on it; and this hand, which I gave him as the pledge of my

disinterested affection, I now offer again to him as the warrant of its everlasting continuance.

DANVERS.

As such I take it—and may heav'n regard me as I prove deserving of the precious gift!

SYDENHAM.

All this may be mighty fine, and mighty pathetic—but (to *Harcourt*) give me leave to tell you, sir—zounds! did'nt you talk to me in a different style just now? What did you mean, sir, by your four thousand a year—

MRS. DANVERS.

Dear sir, what are you talking about?

SYDENHAM.

Stand out of the way, child—I desire, sir, to know what you meant by your rodomontades—

HARCOURT.

Nothing, sir, but to give you that information about your son-in-law, which I thought you had a right to receive.

SYDENHAM.

And was—I beg pardon—was what you then said the absolute matter of fact?

HARCOURT.

True, on the honour of a gentleman.

SYDENHAM.

Once more your pardon for my impetuosity.—(To *Mrs.*

Danvers.) So, so, you seem to have made a little mistake here—egad! you and your high-flying sentiments are fairly taken in.

MRS. DANVERS.

I can hardly give credit to my senses—Mr. Danvers, what does all this mean?

DANVERS.

Forgive me, love, for this only deception I ever will practice upon you. The temptation was too strong to be resisted. The ecstatic transport of obtaining you, solely from the flattering opinion which you had form'd of me, led me into the continuance of a concealment, for which nothing but the devoted attachment of my whole life can atone.

SYDENHAM.

Well said—but pray, Mr. Danvers, where may your estate lie?

DANVERS.

Principally, sir, in Sussex.

SYDENHAM.

Then you must be close on the South Downs. Prodigious fine sheep you have there. Sir, they may talk of their Rylands and their Merinos, but, in my judgment, for shape, size, and bone, your true South Downs—I've got such a lot of them—you're fond of farming, I hope.

DANVERS.

I have had no great opportunity, sir, as yet of doing much in that way.

SYDENHAM.

You'll take to it, I make no doubt. It's the only infallible way of obtaining notoriety. You'll be sure of appearing in a great way in the newspapers. Besides, there's a refinement of taste, a liberality among our modern agriculturists—

DANVERS.

So far I am able to agree with you. It is impossible not to admire the beautiful equality which appears to prevail at their meetings—dukes and drovers, grandees and graziers—

SYDENHAM.

Aye, professional merit and brilliancy of experiment—I'm glad, Mr. Danvers, you take such a turn—it's your only line now-a-days—so profitable, so liberal, so sentimental—you're a member of the board?

DANVERS.

I have not that honour, sir.

SYDENHAM.

Good luck, good luck!—Well, I'll propose you at the next meeting.—Nor Mr. Harcourt neither?

HARCOURT.

I ask your pardon, sir.

SYDENHAM.

You are? I rejoice to hear it. Perhaps you would like to look over my farm—small to be sure in size, *multum in parvo*, as one may say—a little of every thing—planting, manuring, breeding, feeding, fattening—by the bye, I've a process in hand—a little fancy of my own in the fattening way—quite new and original, as the Duke and Sam Slaughter say—

HARCOURT.

May I presume to ask what it may be?

SYDENHAM.

I'll tell you in confidence—a vast secret though—an immense thing, which will raise our West India property ten years' purchase at a stroke. What would you think now of fattening oxen upon brown sugar and molasses?

HARCOURT.

The devil! Brown sugar and molasses!

SYDENHAM.

I knew you'd be surpriz'd. A grand thought, isn't it? I am trying the experiment at this very moment on two noble beasts out of Leicestershire.—Odsso! I had forgotten—it's rather unlucky, for they made off this morning, and, what's worse, broke down the patent paling.—I'm sorry, Mr. Harcourt, you should be disappointed; but accidents of this sort will happen—

HARCOURT.

They will so.—But, sir, you talk'd of our looking over your farm—I shall have great pleasure in accompanying you.

SYDENHAM.

Sir, I shall have great pleasure in attending you.—You know you pass all day with me—sha'n't let you go, I assure you—Come—let us set out, and take a look at the farm—I can shew you a few specimens, both of live and dead stock, and some experiments—This way, good Mr. Harcourt—

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.

*Cognovit's Garden.**Enter Latitat and Peggy.*

PEGGY.

Well, I'll be sworn if you ben't the drollest man, and hav'nt the funniest ways with you—

LATITAT.

Why miss, we *box esprits*, as the French say, learn all these sort of things just as it might be by rote.

PEGGY.

For my part now, I wonder where you could find all those fine choice words. I vow it does one's heart good to hear them. You must keep monsous good company.

LATITAT.

Let Larcany Latitat alone for that. There's narrow a gemman of the law in town that's up to me. Why I'm at the playhouse every night after office hours. There's I and a party of us—if you could but see us in the box lobby—damme! we make such fun, and kick up such a row!

PEGGY.

That must be pure sport—

LATITAT.

You may say that.—And then, miss, I belong to a private theatricals—

PEGGY.

What's that?

LATITAT.

Why, miss, there's a set of us, ladies and gemmen, who spout, and act plays, and such like, among ourselves. 'Twould do you good to see me when I am drest and on the boards—though they all say I am most toppingest in your genteel comedy, your Romos, your Lotharios—

PEGGY.

Well, I could have been sworn you had been one of those—no wonder you know all the quality—

LATITAT.

The quality—not a dook, nor a marquiz in Lunnun, that

I doesn't know—hand in glove with 'em all.—*A propos* to that, miss, as the French say, if you hav'n't dropt your glove—

PEGGY.

So I have, ifegs!

LATITAT.

Permit me to clap it on, miss—but first let me plump down at your feet, as we does at our theatricals, and ravage a kiss from that fair hand—

PEGGY.

What good will you get by that?

LATITAT.

“ Oh! ”. as the man in the play says, “ that I were a glove upon that hand! ”

PEGGY.

And how would you be the better for that, pray?

LATITAT.

“ That I might kiss that cheek. ”

PEGGY.

Law! what a queer way of asking.—Does the man in the play say that too?

LATITAT.

To be sure. And then—oh you dear, adorable!

[*Kisses her.*]

PEGGY.

I desire, Mr. Latitat, that you'll not take no such

such liberties with me. I wonder what it is you take me for. I'd have you to know I'm none of your playing ladies, and that I sha'n't suffer no such freedoms from no one but my husband.

LATITAT (*aside*).

Egad! that's no bad hint.—Don't ye be angry, miss—look on me—look on Larceny Latitat, whose heart is burnt to a cinder by the flame of your fair eyes. Not Romo himself was never half so much in love as I am.

PEGGY.

Is that out of a play too?

LATITAT.

No—its all out of my own original genus.

PEGGY.

So then—you are fallen in love with me all of a sudden it seems.

LATITAT.

I am—over head and ears—and I hope you'll fall in love with me too—

PEGGY.

And suppose I was not—

LATITAT.

No, Miss Marianne, I wo'n't suppose no such supposition—'twould drive me to desperation—

PEGGY.

Aye, so you fine gentlemen are apt to say—but how am I to know whether you are in real earnest?

LATITAT.

Oh that I had a sword to pierce this breast and shew you a true lover's heart!—But I have no sword—'Tisn't the fashion for gemmen to wear none—but I'll throw myself into the fishpond—

PEGGY.

What! all for love of me?

LATITAT.

Yes, cruel, barbarous! all for love of you—oh Miss Marianne, take pity on me, take pity on a love-sick youth, who has gone twenty years in love already! Oh melt that frozen heart! Smile on your Latitat who kneels before you—give me that pretty hand—let me smother it with my burning kisses—oh transport! oh ecstasy!—No gemman in England wasn't never half so much in love as I am—

PEGGY.

And will you marry me in real downright earnest?

LATITAT.

I will—you shall be Mrs. Latitat—nay, you shall be more—I will be made a knight—nay, I'll be made a barrow knight, and you shall be my lady—

PEGGY.

Shall I ifegs? Oh I should so like to be a barrow lady!

LATITAT.

You shall—you shall be my Lady Latitat—you shall have purcedence.—When you go to the playhouse—

PEGGY.

The playhouse! Oh you dear cretur! will you take me there?

LATITAT.

I will—you shall sit in the lower boxes—

PEGGY.

No, I wo'n't—

LATITAT.

No, miss! why not?

PEGGY.

I'll be whipt if I do.—Sit in the lower boxes indeed! Lady Latitat in the lower boxes!—I don't know what you mean.

LATITAT.

Why, my dear, you know the lower boxes—

PEGGY.

No, I don't know no such thing. Catch me sitting any where but in the upper boxes. I'm sure I'm good enough to sit there.

LATITAT.

Well, my dear, you shall—in the upper boxes of all, if you please.—Now, my dear, as you and I understand one another, the sooner we settle this here business the better. There is a tide in the affairs of men, as Mr. what d'ye call him says.—I'll run and call a coach—off for London—get a licence—be splic'd, and hey back again in a shay and four!—That's your stile!

PEGGY.

I love doing things in a stile—how the old ones will stare when they find we are off!

LATITAT.

We must contrive somehow to get away, without their knowing nothing—

PEGGY.

Never you mind—do you call the coach—you'll find me in the parlour.

LATITAT.

I'm gone—but stop—one kiss to give an edge to my intent—(*Kisses her*).

PEGGY.

There—why you strange cretur! (*Aside.*) Oh he's a charming man! [*She runs off.*]

LATITAT.

Well said I!—now, master Cognovit, I'll shew you one of your own tricks. We'll see who'll get the estate, you or I. [*Exit.*]

END OF ACT L

ACT II.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in Cognovit's House.

Enter Mrs. Mactavish.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

HA, ha, ha! The stars be gued unto me! Wha would ha' thought yestreen that auld Jeannet Maclashan should ha' been maistress Cognovit! Weell, the mair luck's mine—noo I ha' gotten him, I'll mak the maist o' him.

Enter Cognovit.

Ah! maister Cognovit, what garr'd ye stay? Sinsyne the menester join'd oor hands, I ha' acquir'd a right untill yere company.

COGNOVIT.

My dear love, I fly with impatience to rejoin you—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

But what garr'd ye stay?

COGNOVIT.

Couldn't settle with the hackney coachman—an exorbitant rascal—wouldn't take less than twelve shillings.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Hoot awa, mon; what speak ye o' twall shillings!
What's twall shillings to ye noo? Ken ye nae ye're noo
laird o' Drummanagriskin?

COGNOVIT.

Very true—very sensibly observ'd indeed.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ye'll judge of it yersel whan we gang north. There's
nae sic a thing in aw Clackmannanshire.

COGNOVIT.

I shall be all impatience to get down there. Have
you any objection, my love, to take a trip to Drumma-
na—what's your castle's name?—Somehow or other I
can't get my tongue—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Drummanagriskin Castle, an unco respectable name—

COGNOVIT.

Very respectable indeed. Well, Mrs. Cognovit, my
dear, I say, what do you think of a trip there, when
we've done our business with young Danvers? I should
like prodigiously to see it; it must be a very fine place.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Troth, ye may ca' it magneficent. But, my dear
maister Cognovit, there's a time for aw things. We
mun be tenty, and mind the main chance. Let's fenish wi'
the Dawnverses, and then tak oor pleasure i' the north.

COGNOVIT.

Nothing can be more judiciously observ'd; I'll set about the business directly.—But don't you think, my love—don't you think that widow's apparel is rather unsuitable now? Don't you think something more gay—more in unison with this joyful occasion—eh, my dear Mrs. Cognovit?—Not but that you look extremely engaging in those weeds—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ah, maister Cognovit! Still complimenting and flatter-
ing! Nae wonder my peur heart could na resist yere
blawndishments.

COGNOVIT.

Nay, you do look quite captivating—quite fascinating
—but a little change of dress, you know—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

I shall na' oppose yere wushes—ye shall see what an
influence ye ha' o'er me. I shall send for the drawper,
and the mellener, and the mantua maker, and gi' orders.
Shall that content ye?

COGNOVIT.

Perfectly.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

But d'ye ken, my dear maister Cognovit, I mun apply
to ye for some cash.

COGNOVIT.

Cash, madam !

MRS. MACTAVISH.

I left haime the morn sae suddenly, thinking I would na be absent long, that I brought nae seller wi' me.

COGNOVIT.

Oh ho ! you only want some silver—I believe I can supply you.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Hoot awa, mon ! What talk ye o' seller ? I canna purchase new apparel withoot cash ye ken ; and, as I told ye, I came oot withoot ony idea o' the sort. Ye need na be sae canker'd aboot sic a trifle, when ye consider I ha' ge'en ye my aw—

COGNOVIT.

I confess that—but my dear—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Made ye laird o' Drummanagriskin—

COGNOVIT.

I don't dispute it.—But—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Aw my tocher—aw my personals—

COGNOVIT.

Very true—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Withoot stipulating for ony thing in return—

COGNOVIT.

I acknowledge it—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Withoot ony provision—ony settlement—ony trustee
to secure my property—

COGNOVIT.

'Twas generous and noble of you. How much would
you please to have?

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Troth, ony trifle ye may ha' aboot ye. These things,
ye ken, canna be had for naething.

COGNOVIT.

No more they can't.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Drawpers, and melleners, and mantua makers wull
mak their chairges—

COGNOVIT.

To be sure they will.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

And ye ken I would be decent in my appearance noo,
for yere honour and credit. Ye shall na like, I doobt, to
hear the folks speering, wha's that ill-drest unsonsie body?

COGNOVIT.

By no manner of means.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

What I ask o' ye is but a sort of a loan—

COGNOVIT.

I know it, my dear—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

For when I am rightly settled, and ha' gotten matters here a little comfortable aboot me, I shall send to toon for my gear, and draw my seller oot o' my banker's hands for yere use.

COGNOVIT.

That will be very proper. Well, my love, and what may this trifle be which you want for your present occasions?

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Troth, nae muckle matters. I would think aboot twa hundred poonds sterling.

COGNOVIT.

What the devil!—Two hundred pounds?

MRS. MACTAVISH.

When I think on't again, I doobt whether that shall be eneugh. Consider what it is I mun order.

COGNOVIT.

High time to consider indeed!—Two hundred pounds! Two hundred pounds, Mrs. Cognovit, is a sum—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Hoot awa, mon! What a din are ye making wi' yere paltry twa hundred poonds!

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COGNOVIT.

Nay, my dear, I only venture to represent that two hundred pounds—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ye're an ill mon, maister Cognovit, to be cawpable o' grudging sic a paltry sum, after aw the obligawtions ye are under to me. Ken ye nae the value o' my property gees me a right—

COGNOVIT.

I'm perfectly sensible of it—but really two hundred pounds—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Always hairping and hairping on yere twa hundred poonds! What is't maks ye sae niggardly?—Waes me! Hoo I was deceiv'd in ye—ye were aw glavering and promising, and ye look'd sae blaite; and noo ye are storming and domineering. Ye ought to tak shame to yeresel for sic unmanly conduct.

COGNOVIT.

Gadzooks! What do you mean, Mrs. Cognovit? I storm and domineer? I unmanly conduct? Who the devil has been scolding and hectoring all this time but yourself?—If you would but hear reason—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Aye, aye, sweer awa—ye tak the ready course to rive my heart—to treat a peur wumman as she were a dog—

to intice me untill matrimony, to cajole me oot o' aw my property, and to refuse me my first request after my feulish acceptance o' ye—oh! oh!—(*Cries.*)

COGNOVIT.

Nay, don't let it affect you thus—I am very sorry—you shall have what you wish—come, forget and forgive—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ah, maister Cognovit! Ye dinna ken me yet. A haird word fra ye gangs near to mak me distract.

COGNOVIT.

My love—my dear—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Nay, dinna ye luk on me wi' sic a crabbed aspect—dinna ye froon on yere peur wify—

COGNOVIT.

I frown!—I protest and declare—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ah! clear up that bonny broo—let me ha' ain o' yeer sweet smiles—come, ye shanna be sae canker'd—there's a kess for ye to mak freends—

COGNOVIT.

Charming creature! You have such a way with you. Come with me to my study. I believe I have the very sum you want in my desk. 'Tis heartily at your service, my love.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Noo ye talk like yeersel—noo I ken ye again—ah maister Cognovit! gin ye could but think hoo it misbecomes ye to froon! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

*Sydenham's Pleasure-ground.**Enter Sydenham and Harcourt.*

SYDENHAM.

Well, sir, now you have made the tour of my farm, what do you think of it? Pretty well, ey!—Some taste, some knowledge of things? A little merit here and there?—ey?

HARCOURT.

An absolute epitome of modern improvement—like a folio volume compress'd into a duodecimo.

SYDENHAM.

A most happy allusion indeed—

Enter Mr. and Mrs. Danvers.

Ah my girl!—Mr. Danvers!—You gave us the slip in the meadow yonder—this honeymoon—ey, Harcourt!—'Twill be another thing by and by—we can't expect much of their company yet—

MRS. DANVERS.

I hope, my dear papa, that you'll have a great deal of it. We have been laying out a plan for that purpose—

SYDENHAM.

Have you? Let's hear it.

MRS. DANVERS.

Why, you must know, Mr. Danvers tells me he has a large house in Sussex, in the middle of a park well stock'd with deer—

SYDENHAM.

So much the worse—a bad sort of stock—not half so profitable as sheep.—Why doesn't he stick to his South Downs?

MRS. DANVERS.

Delightfully surrounded by a number of small farms—

SYDENHAM.

That's an execrable system—monstrous repairs—no capitals—I could prove to you, Mr. Danvers—

MRS. DANVERS.

And close by an extensive tract of waste land—

SYDENHAM.

I am rejoic'd to hear it.—The grandest thing in the world for speculation—paring and burning, inclosing and fencing, building and manuring—I heartily wish you joy of it, my dear boy!

MRS. DANVERS.

Well, sir, our plan is, as we have a large house, to ask you to divide your time with us—

DANVERS.

Yes, sir, to prevail on you to consider it as your own—to afford me the benefit of your instructions—

SYDENHAM.

Nothing can give me so much pleasure.

HARCOURT.

Or me either, sir. I shall be happy to have you in my neighbourhood.

SYDENHAM.

What! do you live near him?

HARCOURT.

Our estates join; and, as I have an interest in the waste land you speak of, I trust I shall participate in the benefit of your instructions.

SYDENHAM.

I shall be happy to give you every assistance in my power. Nothing like doing business on a large scale. There's as great a difference between managing an extensive concern of that sort and nibbling at a little paltry farm, as between sailing in the Atlantic and dabbling in a duck-pond.

Enter Simon.

SIMON.

A letter, sir, for Mr. Danvers.

DANVERS.

Desire the bearer to wait.

[Exit Simon.]

(*To Harcourt*) This is a note from Cognovit. I wonder how he heard of my being here.

SYDENHAM.

Mr. Cognovit? I don't know the name; but I beg you'll make free, Mr. Danvers—any friend of yours—

DANVERS.

He was my father's executor, and has had the management of my property during my minority. Of course, he must be consulted about the settlement to be made on this lady.

SYDENHAM.

Let him come by all means. The sooner these sort of things are got rid of the better. By the by, had you a long minority?

DANVERS.

About sixteen years.

SYDENHAM.

Odso! there must be vast savings. Do you know the amount?

DANVERS.

I have not had any account of them yet.

SYDENHAM.

Let me see—sixteen years—four thousand a year—the sum must be immense—why you didn't say a word about it—hey, Marianne! This husband of yours is a most incomprehensible person—

MRS. DANVERS.

If he be singular, sir, it arises solely from a superiority of merit.

SYDENHAM.

I believe you.—But come, Mr. Danvers; you must answer this note, and invite your friend to call here.—Sixteen years minority—large tract of waste land—the greatest thing I ever heard of! *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE III.

*Cognovit's Garden.**Enter Latitat and Peggy.*

LATITAT.

Nay, my dear Mrs. Latitat, pray hear me.

PEGGY.

I desire, Mr. Latitat, you'll not keep following me about. I wish I had known your purceedings before I married you.

LATITAT.

What can have put you into such a quandary?

PEGGY.

Didn't you promise that, when we were married, we should come back in stile in a shay and four?

LATITAT.

Well—

PEGGY.

And didn't we come back like scrubs in a vulgar hackney coach?

LATITAT.

To be sure, my dear, a hack is not the genteelest sort of equipage—

PEGGY.

Didn't you say you would make me a lady?

LATITAT.

And so I will—but do let me get in a word—you have no experience, no idea of what's going on—

PEGGY.

No?—You'll find I know what's what as well as another.

LATITAT.

You don't, I tell you—how should you?—Now I do—I know we have the deuce of a fellow to deal with, that old Cognovit. There's not a bigger rogue in all Westminster Hall nor he is, though all the attornies go there.

PEGGY.

Well, and what then?

LATITAT.

The then is, if we don't look sharp, he'll come round us with some of his touches of sharp practice, and non-suit us just as we are looking for a verdict in our favour.

PEGGY.

I don't understand nothing about nonsuits and verdicts.

LATITAT.

How should you?—well then, I tell you Cognovit's a rogue, and, if we don't get the start of him, he'll chouse us out of the estate.

PEGGY.

You don't say so—

LATITAT.

I do—now, my dear, as I know his tricks, you had better leave me to manage him.—And so, my dear, as I wouldn't give him a suspicion of what had happen'd, I wouldn't bring you back in a shay and four.

PEGGY.

And was that the only reason?

LATITAT.

Yes, my dear, and a very good one too; for if he were but to know that you and I are man and wife—

PEGGY.

He couldn't unmarry us, could he?

LATITAT.

No, but he might do worse than that—he might contrive to make us starve now we are married. You don't know what sort of a fellow he is. He'll talk over the old gentlewoman at no rate.

PEGGY.

Ifackins! She's a match for him. Do you know now, if I don't think we're in more danger from her than from him.

LATITAT.

Really? I should never have thought it. She looks like a decentish sort of a body.—But, my love, as I was a saying, though you and I be man and wife, we must mind what we do before them. We must be distant like, and not take no familiarities—

PEGGY.

Law! What do you mean?

LATITAT.

Why, for instance, when I speak to you, you must behave quite civil like, and look smiling, as if you thought me vastly agreeable; and then, you know, nobody will suspect I am your husband.

PEGGY.

No more they wo'n't—

LATITAT.

And then, my love, I must be very attentive to you, and look as if I thought you charming, and say civil things to you, and laugh at all the foolish things you say to me; and then nobody will suspect you are my wife.

PEGGY.

Dear! that will be rare sport—how neatly we shall

take the old ones in—but do look there—never believe me, if they ben't coming this way—

LATITAT.

There they are, egad! arm in arm, like the two kings in the tragedy of the Rehearsal—

PEGGY.

I wonder what they can be talking about so serusly.

LATITAT.

No good, I warrant me—suppose we turn down this close walk, and listen.

PEGGY.

Dear! That will be pure fun—get along, or they'll see us—

[*They go into the walk.*]

Enter Cognovit and Mrs. Mactavish.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Troth, maister Cognovit, yere gairden is chairming, and laid oot wi'infinite taste; but ye'll alloo me to say, it canna compete wi'the policy aboot Drummanagriskin castle—there's a grandeur, a subleemity aboot that, that beats ony thing i'the sooth.

COGNOVIT.

I have heard great accounts of the highlands—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ah! the heelands are a perfec paradise!

COGNOVIT.

I hope we shall soon be able to get down there.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

That, ye ken, shall depend on yere finishing wi'the
Dawnverses.

Enter Servant.

SERVANT.

A note, sir, from Mr. Danvers. *[Exit Servant.]*

LATITAT (*peeping in*).

Now, my dear, slip behind this tree—I should like to
know the contents of that there letter.

PEGGY.

Hush! They'll hear you—

[They hide behind the tree.]

COGNOVIT.

Let's see what the gentleman says—(*reads*)—"Mr.
Danvers will be glad to see Mr. Cognovit whenever it
may be convenient."—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Mighty tarse and laconic!

COGNOVIT.

Quite enough for my purpose. I'll go there directly.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Mind ye dinna commet us aboot Mawrienne.

COGNOVIT.

Don't be under any apprehension about that driveller.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

She's nae sic dreveller as ye think her. There's nae a mair airtfu' hussy in aw Britain nor she is.

COGNOVIT.

Indeed! I never should have imagin'd—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ah maister Cognovit! 'Tis nae aw gowd that glisters. Gin e'er there were a wulf in sheep's cloathing 'tis she.

COGNOVIT.

I protest you surprise me.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

I dinna wonder at ye. She might deceive Pythagoras himsel. But noo I ha' putten ye on yere guard, leuk cannily to the business.

COGNOVIT.

Never fear.—But stay—I must just speak a word—where can Latitat be?—That fellow's never in the way—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ye ken he went oot to fetch a walk wi' Mawrienne.

COGNOVIT.

Egad! we must not let him fetch too many walks with Marianne, if we wish to do our business properly. He's a dev'lish dangerous fellow, I can tell you.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Guedness! maister Latitat? Wha could ha' thought the like o' that o' him? He's sic a canty callant to look to.

COGNOVIT.

Between you and me—its a dead secret—there's not a greater rascal in the profession—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

The poors be gued unto me !

COGNOVIT.

Not a more good for nothing scoundrel unhang'd.
Why the fellow would make no more scruple of drawing the girl into matrimony—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Can there be sic depravity !

COGNOVIT.

True, I assure you. So you must be on your guard.
A woman like you, of an open honest temper, as incapable of suspecting deceit in others as you are of practising it yourself—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Troth, maister Cognovit, ye ha' form'd a true estimate o' my character.

COGNOVIT.

I merely do you justice. Your integrity would be no match for his cunning, if I didn't let you into the secret.
But don't let the dog know I've said any thing.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ye may depend on my discretion. I can act on the

hent without his suspecting it.—But ye munna lose time.
—Maister Dawnvers will be speering after ye.

[*Exeunt.*

Latitat and Peggy advance, and stand looking at each other.

PEGGY.

So, Mr. Latitat!

LATITAT.

Well, madam, and what have you to say?

PEGGY.

For the matter of that, sir, what have you to say? I think the old gemman gave it you pretty handsomely.

LATITAT.

He! aye, aye, he's pretty well known—nobody minds what he says—but the character the old gentlewoman gave of you, madam—

PEGGY.

A nasty old crone! She! To come for to go to talk of me in that there manner! A wolf in sheep's cloathing indeed!—If I'm not even with her—I'll tell you what—no, I won't neither—yes, I will, I don't care, she sha'n't carry it off in that way neither—do you know, that notwithstanding all this old woman's fine speeches, she's no more—(*aside*)—but hold—if I peach now, what becomes of the estate? I never thought of that—(*to Latitat*)—no—I won't tell you nothing.

LATITAT.

Then I'll tell you summut—I've smok'd 'em—As sure as you're there, those two old fograms have been laying their heads together to cheat you 'out of the fortune.

PEGGY.

But you won't let them, will you?

LATITAT.

Leave me alone for that. As for Cognovit, I have him under my thumb—and as for the old woman—

MRS. MACTAVISH (*without*).

Mawrienne!

PEGGY.

Never believe me if she ben't coming—if she should have overheard us now—

MRS. MACTAVISH (*without*).

Mawrienne, I say! Oot alas! where's the lassie flown?

PEGGY.

Don't let her see us together—leave me to manage her.

[*Latitat retires.*]

Enter Mrs. Mactavish.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Hoot awa, Mawrienne! what gars ye lenger here? Dunna ye ken it's nae proper for a young lassie to be sniggering in corners wi' the lads?

PEGGY.

Law ! mother, what a noise you're making about nonsense. Where's the harm of my fetching a walk ?

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ye shanna mak a feul o' me, mess. I ken weell enough what ye are after.

PEGGY.

You'd better take care that other people don't discover what you're after.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

What's that ye say, mess ?

PEGGY.

You thought yourself mighty clever, I dare say, when you was walking just now with Mr. Cognovit—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Weell, mess, and where's the harm o' that ? Maister Cognovit's a decent kind o' body.

PEGGY.

And when you call'd me a wolf in sheep's cloathing,

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Is the lassie gane daft ?

PEGGY.

No—the lassie's not gane daft—but I can understand what you are about, you and old squaretoes there—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Gin ye dare insinuate—but I ken weell wha has taught

you this. This comes o' yeer keeping company wi' that pawky cheel Latitat—

LATITAT (*advancing*).

That's I!

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Wha speer'd for ye?

LATITAT.

Hey? speer'd? I don't understand your lingo.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

I shall na disparage mysel by talking to sic as ye—
come awa, lassie, lets leave him to himsel—

LATITAT.

You needn't give yourself no airs—I'd have you to know—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Stand out o' the way, sir—dunna hinder the lassie—
I insist on't, mess, ye attend on me—

PEGGY.

Good bye—I'll come again directly.

[*Excunt Mrs. M. and Peggy.*]

LATITAT.

So, so—you've been at work here, master Cognovit—
I dare say you think yourself a mighty clever old gentleman—Never mind—I've got the start of you with the girl and her fortune too, and now you and the old woman may do your worst.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.

An Apartment in Sydenham's House.

Enter Sydenham, Mr. and Mrs. Danvers and Harcourt.

SYDENHAM.

And so you say old Ebenezer Danvers was your father. To see how things turn out! He and I were young fellows together forty years ago. We us'd to belong to the same club. He sung an excellent song, and for mixing a bowl of punch he had not his equal. And yet he died, you say, about sixteen years ago. Poor man! we must all come to it some time or other!

DANVERS.

Constant attention to business, sir, and a sedentary life—

SYDENHAM.

Nothing can be worse for the constitution, unless it be broiling under a vertical sun in the West Indies for seventeen years as I did. For, you must know, business happen'd to take a run against me at that time, and I found it expedient to go and look after my concerns at Barbadoes, where, thank heav'n, I was tolerably successful. And you see I stood the climate pretty well.

HARCOURT.

The life which you now lead, sir, is more conducive to health. The air and exercise of your farm—

MRS. DANVERS.

And the goodspirits and good humour which you derive from being constantly engag'd in one pursuit or another—

HARCOURT.

You may be term'd a true patriot, sir, for all your views are directed to the public good.

SYDENHAM.

Lackaday, sir, trifles, mere trifles—done on a limited scale—perhaps with a little judgment—some small degree of spirited enterprize. When we get down to your waste land in Sussex indeed—

DANVERS.

True—when we get you there, sir—

MRS. DANVERS.

Aye, sir, when we have you there, we shall all be so happy and comfortable—

DANVERS.

To be able to shew you those attentions, to which both duty and inclination will prompt us—

MRS. DANVERS.

To enjoy the delights of a beautiful country with those whom one loves—with one's husband on one hand and one's kind affectionate father on the other—

DANVERS.

And then, sir, to look into the state of one's tenantry, to encourage industry and merit—

MRS. DANVERS.

To relieve the poor and distrest—

DANVERS.

To see one's property increasing—to discover new openings for improvement—

SYDENHAM.

Say no more, my dear children! Life cannot afford greater pleasure. Rich as you are, Mr. Danvers, rais'd above the hope or wish for more, and out of all danger of losing what you have—

Enter Cognovit and Simon.

SIMON.

Mr. Cognovit to wait on Mr. Danvers.

[Exit Simon.]

DANVERS.

Mr. Cognovit, I'm glad to see you.

COGNOVIT.

Happy to see you, good sir. The moment I heard of your being in these parts, I made a point of waiting on you.

DANVERS.

I must have the pleasure of introducing you to Mr. Sydenham.

SYDENHAM.

Always rejoic'd to see a friend of yours—

DANVERS.

You know Harcourt already—but here is a lady, with whom you must become acquainted.—Mrs. Danvers, this is my friend, Mr. Cognovit.

MRS. DANVERS.

That title, you know, must always be a passport to my good graces. As the friend of Mr. Danvers, sir, I beg leave to offer you my best respects.

COGNOVIT.

Madam, you overwhelm me with your politeness.—
(*To Danvers*)—Who may this young lady be? A prodigiously fine woman!

DANVERS.

I am happy you approve of her. That lady is Mrs. Danvers, sir.

COGNOVIT.

Mrs. Danvers?—I don't recollect to have heard—pray in what degree of relationship may she stand?

DANVERS.

I have the honour—the happiness, sir, to call her my wife.

COGNOVIT.

Your wife!

DANVERS.

Aye, sir, and that worthy gentleman is my father-in-law.

COGNOVIT.

Your father-in-law !

SYDENHAM.

Why what makes you start and look so oddly ? There's nothing surely so very surprizing in his wife's father being his father-in-law ?

COGNOVIT.

Good heav'n ! And are you really married, Mr. Danvers ?

DANVERS.

To be sure I am.

COGNOVIT.

And to that lady ?

DANVERS.

And to that lady.

COGNOVIT.

What a dreadful occurrence !

DANVERS.

Dreadful ? What do you mean ?

COGNOVIT.

I'd rather have lost a thousand pounds, than you should have done so rash, so unadvis'd a thing. To contract an alliance so destructive of all your hopes !

SYDENHAM.

Heyday ! What's the meaning of all this ? Speak of an alliance with my daughter in this way !

COGNOVIT.

Alas, alas, that it should come to this!—How could you, Mr. Danvers, think of taking such a step without apprizing me?

DANVERS.

I really did not conceive such a communication necessary.

COGNOVIT.

To see now the impetuosity of youth!—I ask your pardon, but my feelings and regard for you hurry me away. You know how sincerely I am attach'd to you.

DANVERS.

In heav'n's name explain yourself. You see how you agitate this lady.

COGNOVIT.

That lady! Isn't she your wife?

DANVERS.

(*To Mrs. Danvers*). Compose yourself, my dear.—(*To Cognovit*)—Mr. Cognovit, I insist on your explaining yourself immediately.

COGNOVIT.

Surely, sir, no explanation from me can be necessary. You must know to what I allude.

MRS. DANVERS.

If, sir, you have heard any thing against me, I charge you speak it.

SYDENHAM.

Aye, sir, what is it you would insinuate against her?

COGNOVIT.

This is most surprizing. Does not the recollection of your honour'd father's will—

DANVERS.

My father's will!

COGNOVIT.

That fatal clause in it, which cuts you from the whole of his property—you surely must know what I mean.

DANVERS.

I have not the most distant comprehension of what you allude to.

SYDENHAM.

Mr. Danvers, sir, this is a matter which must be explain'd. If there have been any tricks play'd in this business, sir—

MRS. DANVERS.

Dear sir, how can you make use of such language?

SYDENHAM.

Pray stand aside. How should you know any thing of the matter?—Mr. Danvers, sir, I call upon you for an explanation of this mystery.

DANVERS.

On my honour, sir, I know no more of it—

SYDENHAM.

That wo'n't pass with me, sir—I have a right to know the whole, and I will know it.

HARCOURT.

I am confident there must be some great mistake in this business, which probably Mr. Cognovit alone can set right. (*To Cognovit*). You must perceive, sir, the alarm you have occasion'd, and cannot scruple to give the explanation which is now become so essential.

COGNOVIT.

To be sure, sir, to be sure.—I am sorry it falls to my lot—griev'd to the very heart—a young man so specially intrusted to my charge, for whose welfare I feel so strong an interest.—It's a heart-breaking thing for me, Mr. Harcourt, it is indeed. But the mischief is done, and can't be remedied.—(*To Danvers*). Is it possible, sir, that you are unacquainted with the clause I mention'd?

DANVERS.

Altogether so.

COGNOVIT.

Then, sir, there is a clause—a clause there is—

SYDENHAM.

Plague on your prolixity! Can't you speak out at once?

COGNOVIT.

Don't interrupt me.—There is, I say, a clause, by

which you absolutely and for ever forfeit—I believe I can nearly remember the exact words—Item, my will is, that if my said son shall at any time hereafter intermarry with any woman, save and except Marianne Beaufort—

SYDENHAM.

Marianne who, do you say?

COGNOVIT.

Marianne Beaufort, daughter of John Beaufort, formerly of Snow Hill, in the City of London, wine merchant—

SYDENHAM.

John Beaufort, formerly of Snow Hill, in the City of London, wine merchant!—Are you quite sure of that?

COGNOVIT.

Quite sure.—During the lifetime of the said Marianne, or while she shall continue single and unmarried, then and in such case—

SYDENHAM.

Aye, now we are coming to the point—

COGNOVIT.

My further will is, that all my said estate, situate, lying and being—

SYDENHAM.

Have done with your law jargon, and speak plain English!

COGNOVIT.

In plain English then, Mr. Danvers in such case is disinherited, and the whole property, real and personal, goes to the said Marianne Beaufort; as in and by the said last will and testament, relation being thereunto had, shall more fully and at large appear.—Ahem!

SYDENHAM.

That is speaking plain English indeed.—So, so, so—the whole property goes to Marianne Beaufort—(*to Cognovit*)—do you happen to know what made old Danvers take this fancy into his head?

COGNOVIT.

Merely for old friendship's sake, and because he was the girl's godfather.—I remember though he mention'd another reason—because old Beaufort had once lent him a thousand pounds at a pinch, when all his other friends had refus'd. He never forgot the obligation.

SYDENHAM.

He didn't?—But Mr. Danvers, what have you to say to all this?

DANVERS.

I really feel so surpriz'd—so shock'd—

SYDENHAM.

No wonder; it's enough to surprize and shock any one, to be reduc'd thus at a stroke from affluence to poverty.

DANVERS.

If that were all, I could bear my reverse like a man ; but, when I reflect on the situation to which I have reduc'd this lady, my resolution staggers—I feel myself unable to support the anguish which fills my bosom—

MRS. DANVERS.

Don't shew less courage than I do. I took you, you know, when I thought you poor, and I feel no disappointment when I find you really are so. You are still the Danvers of my choice—

DANVERS.

I cannot bear this tenderness—it unmans me, and makes me weaker than a child.—Wretch that I am ! to have reduc'd you to such a state—

MRS. DANVERS.

Nay, you must not consider it thus.—Mr. Harcourt, do unite with me to tranquillize his mind.—Pray, my love, be calm—hear what we have to say to you—

[*Mr. and Mrs. Danvers and Harcourt retire to the back scene.*]

COGNOVIT.

I am greatly afflicted, good sir, at having been the innocent cause of all this disturbance. I would have given any thing to prevent so shocking a catastrophe.

SYDENHAM.

No doubt. You must have a very tender regard for him.

COGNOVIT.

Very true, sir, very true—I was his father's friend—his executor—I have known the young man from his cradle—oh sir! this is a heavy stroke on me indeed!

SYDENHAM.

Worthy gentleman! no doubt it must affect you.—But pray do you know any thing of this same Marianne Beaufort?

COGNOVIT.

Why, sir, by the meeorest accident in the world I chanc'd to hear of her. I had not the remotest idea of the matter, as you may believe, till this morning, when one Mrs. Mactavish of the north, a client of mine, call'd on me about a little piece of business. When we had got through that, to my infinite surprise she began about her niece Marianne Beaufort—

SYDENHAM.

Her niece!

COGNOVIT.

Yes—and about the clause in old Dahvers' will. I knew all about the clause before, and so I told her—

SYDENHAM.

Did you indeed?

COGNOVIT.

Yes. So she went on: "Do you know," said she,

"that the contingency has happened? Young Danvers," said she, "is actually married to Miss Sydenham."

SYDENHAM.

She told you so?

COGNOVIT.

Yes—

SYDENHAM.

Then you must have a prodigiously short memory, for it seems to have escaped you before you came here.

COGNOVIT.

Escap'd before!—I—I—that is I didn't.—You know, good sir, one can't always place an absolute dependance—reports don't always—

SYDENHAM.

You account for it very clearly. Well, go on with your story.

COGNOVIT.

Where was I?—Oh!—"Young Danvers is actually married," said she.—"Married!" said I, "the thing's impossible." You perceive I didn't believe it.

SYDENHAM.

I do.

COGNOVIT.

"True as you sit there," said she. "And now, Mr. Cognovit," said she—for she's quite a woman of busi-

ness—"now," said she, "you must undertake the cause, and assist me to recover the property for the girl."—"Madam," said I, "the thing's out of the question; I have the honour to be Mr. Danvers's friend, and have the management of all his concerns."—I could not give her any other answer, you know.

SYDENHAM.

Certainly.—But what's your opinion of her claim?

COGNOVIT.

A very bad business—quite against us in every point of view.—That cursed clause in the will!—Jury must find a verdict against us—judgment in ejectment follows.—Or set the case, they file their bill in chancery—decree in their favour—sent before the master to account for arrears and profits—the devil and all of costs. You perceive I am speaking against my own interests; but conscience, Mr. Sydenham, conscience is stronger with me than any worldly motives, and therefore, under all the circumstances of the case, I must decidedly advise against any measures of opposition.

SYDENHAM.

If that be your opinion—Pray where is this Mrs. Mac-tavish?

COGNOVIT.

At this moment at my house with her niece.

SYDENHAM.

What, Marianne Beaufort?

COGNOVIT.

Herself.

SYDENHAM.

And what's become of old Beaufort?

COGNOVIT.

Dead and gone long ago. Not a day too soon, for any thing he was worth.

SYDENHAM.

You knew him then, I presume?

COGNOVIT

What, old John!—Knew him well enough—a silly stupid fellow, who never would attend to business, or follow my advice; so he broke up, went all to pieces—died of dram-drinking—

SYDENHAM.

Poor gentleman!—You are quite sure he is dead?

COGNOVIT.

Sure enough of that. He was buried at St. Sepulchre's—
—I was at his funeral. By the same token, Paul Purgative the 'pothecary bought the lease of his house.

SYDENHAM.

Died of dram-drinking—buried at St. Sepulchre's—
and Paul Purgative the apothecary!—There's no resist-

ing such a mass of proofs.—Well, Mr. Cognovit, as your opinion is so decidedly against us, I can't help agreeing with you, that it will be best to give the parties as little trouble as possible.

COGNOVIT.

Undoubtedly.

SYDENHAM.

Do you think you could prevail on the ladies to honour us with their company?

COGNOVIT.

Certainly. They shall wait on you directly. I am happy, my good sir, you have adopted this plan. It shews your good sense. When a case is perfectly clear against us, an honest practitioner, like myself, always advises against resistance. The idlest thing in the world—throwing the helve after the hatchet.—I humbly take my leave,—(*Aside*)—The completest old fool I ever met with!

[*Exit.*

SYDENHAM.

Let me see now—what's the sum of all his intelligence?—Clause in favour of Marianne Beaufort—Mrs. Mactavish her aunt—old Beaufort dead.—A pretty piece of business!—What is to be done in it?—Let me see—Egad! I have it. Mr. Harcourt, a word with you, if you please.—This is an awkward sort of occurrence, Mr. Harcourt—

HARCOURT.

Believe me, sir, I most sincerely participate in the distress which of course you must feel. If any effort of mine—

SYDENHAM.

I am sensible of your friendship, and will not scruple to put it to the test. Will you favour me with a few minutes' private conversation? There are some matters which I wish to mention—

HARCOURT.

I am perfectly at your service.

SYDENHAM.

Let us first dispose of these poor children, and try to divert their attention. Come, Mr. Danvers—things to be sure have taken an unexpected turn, but we can't help it, you know.

DANVERS.

Oh, sir! Could I have been spar'd the torturing reflection of having involv'd your inestimable daughter in my ruin!

MRS. DANVERS.

I positively will not let you talk in this manner—I must give you a little of my own courage.

SYDENHAM.

Better try, my love, whether a little change of scene won't raise your husband's spirits. Mr. Harcourt and I will join you immediately.

MRS. DANVERS.

Come, my dear—let us follow my father's advice.—
Here's my hand—I offer it with a smiling countenance.

DANVERS.

You are an angel! The only remaining hope I have
on earth! [*Exeunt Mr. and Mrs. Danvers.*

SYDENHAM.

Now, Mr. Harcourt, let us take advantage of their
absence. In my study we shall be free from interruption
—I have such things to tell you!—Give me leave to shew
you the way. [*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

*Cognovit's Garden.**Enter Latitat.*

LATITAT.

GONE to wait upon Mr. Danvers!—Well, I am a good impudent fellow myself, but I'm nothing to Cognovit. There's a sort of cool assurance about him that goes beyond any thing.—Damme if I could have nerves to look a man in the face, if I had treated him as he has treated that poor youth.—Oh ho! here he comes—

Enter Cognovit.

COGNOVIT.

(*Aside*).—What, that fellow here? He must not know what's going on.—My dear Latitat, I'm rejoic'd to see you—you're the very man I wanted to meet. Just return'd from the Danvers's—you know I have no secrets from you, so I'll tell you in confidence things go on but badly in that quarter—hazy weather, as one may say—

LATITAT.

How so?

COGNOVIT.

Plague on 'em! They're as bad to deal with as a special jury.—All I said just three blue beans in one blue bladder—they demand proofs, and be hang'd to them—talk of defending action—set us all at defiance—

LATITAT.

The deuce they do! It's likely then to be a tedious business—

COGNOVIT.

Beyond all doubt. So we must take proper measures on our side—file bill in Mrs. Mactavish's name—bring action—no time to be lost. So, my dear Latitat, be so good as to take my nag—get to town as fast as you can—don't lose a minute in retaining Puzzle and Browbeat—there's no getting on without them—

LATITAT.

There surely can be no such hurry—

COGNOVIT.

Bless you, my dear friend, there never was such a set of hard-mouth'd, litigious—that old Sydenham swears he'll spend his last shilling to oppose our claim—

LATITAT.

I hope then you've got proofs—

COGNOVIT.

Aye, aye, we have enough of them. Mrs. Mactavish has the certificates and so forth all safe under lock and key in her dressing-box. If we find, as we go on, we want more evidence, there are ways and means of procuring it—you understand me?—But do get off as soon as you can, my dear Latitat—you needn't hurry yourself to come back this evening—to-morrow will be quite soon enough.—(*Aside*)—So, he's got rid of—now for business.

[*Exit Cognovit.*]

LATITAT.

So—the bill to be filed in Mrs. Mactavish's name—Mrs. Mactavish has the certificates and so forth safe under lock and key in her dressing-box!—Egad! if I don't look sharp, though I've got hold of the girl, Mrs. Mactavish will get hold of the estate.

Enter Peggy.

PEGGY.

Law! Mr. Latitat, what a man you are! Never in the way when you are wanted.—Here's a piece of business going forward!—I'll give you till to-morrow to guess.

LATITAT.

You'd better tell me at once. Some new vagary of the old woman, I suppose.

PEGGY.

Vagary! You may say that.—Never trust me if she ben't married.

LATITAT.

Indeed!—And to whom, pray?

PEGGY.

Would you believe it?—To no lesser a person than Mr. Cognovit himself.

LATITAT.

The deuce! Cognovit!—How came you to know?

PEGGY.

How should I know!—How should I not know?—She makes noise enough about it. There has she been this half hour, settling herself, as she calls it, and putting every body else in confusion; making such a riot and racket with her orders, placing this, removing that, scolding the servants—

LATITAT.

(*Whistles*).—So, so, so—my very humble service to you, honest master Cognovit—I begin now to understand why you was so anxious to get me out of the way.

PEGGY.

There—don't you hear her?—I'll be whipt if she's not coming here, driving a whole troop of 'em before her.

Enter Mrs. Mactavish and Servants.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Awa ye fashous canker'd pack o' ye ! I'll learn ye hoo
to conduct yeersels noo I'm mestress here.

MAN.

I don't understand your lingo, but if so be as how
you says as I—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Gi' o'er, ye niff-naffing carl ye ! or I'll mak short
work wi' ye.

WOMAN.

I'm sure since I liv'd in sarvice I never was so treated
by nobody.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Wull ye be jabbering too ?

WOMAN.

Why sure a body may speak. Thof I says it, I knows
my business as well, and has as good a karakter—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

An ye dunna keep silence, ye shall evacuate the
hooose.—Awa wi' ye ! Get ye ben the doors !

[Exeunt Servants.]

Enter Cognovit.

COGNOVIT.

Heyday ! What's the matter now ?

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Troth, there's matter eneugh—sic a sort o' idle vagabonds as ye've gotten for yere domestics—

COGNOVIT.

I protest I know no harm of them.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Wha speers an ye do? I wish, maister Cognovit, ye wou'd na interfere wi' my prerogative. Dunna ye ken I've the hoosehold depairtment?

COGNOVIT.

With great submission, I only ventur'd to give my opinion—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ye wull always intrude yeresel.—Dunna ye ken, as I'm yere wife—

LATITAT.

Bless my soul! I beg leave to offer my congratulations—

PEGGY.

What! Are you two married?—Ha, ha, ha!—That's rare fun ifegs!

LATITAT.

I wish you joy of having got so amable a spouse.

COGNOVIT.

There, now—you see what your curs'd babbling has done—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

My bobbling!

COGNOVIT.

Hadn't we agreed to keep the thing a secret?

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Hoot awa, mon!—A secret! What gars ye think o' that? I dunna comprehend the gued o' sic a mystery.

COGNOVIT.

But, my dear, do let me say a word in private to you.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

What hinders ye're speaking oot? I'm sure ye've nae cause to regret what ye've done.

COGNOVIT.

I'm perfectly sensible of that. But, my dear, its quite a different sort of thing, my love, that I wish to speak to you about.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Weel, use yere pleasure. I'm aw compliance.

COGNOVIT.

You are so.—By the bye, Mr. Latitat, I wonder you're not gone. Don't you know how pressing the business is?

LATITAT.

I'll take care of it, never you fear.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

What gars ye lenger, maister Cognovit?

COGNOVIT.

I ask pardon: Favour me with your hand, my love!

[*Exeunt Cognovit and Mrs. Mactavish.*]

PEGGY.

There now, you see I told you the truth.

LATITAT.

Come here—come closer yet—

PEGGY.

I'm close enough sure—

LATITAT.

No you're not—I've a secret to tell you—

PEGGY.

Law! I loves a secret—

LATITAT.

Do you?—Then I've one big enough to make your hair stand an end, like quills upon the frightful porkepine, as the man says in the play. Do you know, I've diskiver'd as how those two old fograms want to cheat us out of the estate.

PEGGY.

Lord help you, that's no secret.

LATITAT.

And do you know, moreover nor that, I've diskiver'd how to prevent 'em?

PEGGY.

You don't say so?

LATITAT.

Yes I do.—Come close—we must get hold of the old woman's papers.—They're in her dressing-box—you know the dressing-box?—Do you think you're up to opening it?

PEGGY.

I saw it standing wide open this very minute.

LATITAT.

Did you i'faith! now's your time then. Brush off, and bring me all the papers you can find.

PEGGY.

That will be pure. I'll bring 'em, never fear.

[*Exit.*]

LATITAT.

If the old one should be out of the way now, I shall have the game in my own hands.—Odslife! isn't that the old woman's voice?—No, it's only the cat in the pantry—Egad, master Cognovit! I'll shew you I'm up to sharp practice as well as yourself. I'll give you a Rowland for your Oliver—

Enter Peggy.

PEGGY.

Here they are, every scrap and morsel of them!

LATITAT.

Let me see—hum—ha! by Jove, here they are, sure enough! Now, my dear, mind what I say to you. Not a syllable, remember, about our being married.

PEGGY.

No! why not we as well the old—

LATITAT.

Not yet, I tell you.—If they ax where I am, don't you say nothing. Cognovit thinks I'm gone to Lunnun—but I shall be close by, incog as they say.

PEGGY.

Dear, how funny! and the old ones not know nothing?

LATITAT.

No—and d'ye mind—if they should happen to miss the papers, and set a rowing about 'em, you must hold your tongue, and look quite surpriz'd and innocent like as it were.

PEGGY.

What, so?

LATITAT.

Vastly well—when all other trades fail, you'll make a capitable actress.—But good bye—one buss, and then—

PEGGY.

Law! you're so strange—nay, you shall have no more, that's poz.

LATITAT.

Well, well, I'm off—don't you forget now what I told you.

PEGGY.

You shall find I'm up to more nor you thinks of.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

*Sydenham's Garden.**Enter Mr. and Mrs. Danvers.*

MRS. DANVERS.

Be of better courage, my dear Danvers. Consider both yourself and me.

DANVERS.

You! whose happiness was the object of my life! You! whom I have thus brought to ruin! The very thought borders on distraction.

MRS. DANVERS.

Do not let the excess of your feelings betray you into an error, that may deprive you of the happiness which it is still in your power to enjoy. You love me, Danvers—

DANVERS.

Beyond worlds—I cannot speak the ardour of my affection, or the agony which pangs my soul, when I reflect on your present situation.

MRS. DANVERS.

Preserve all your love, but prove it as becomes a man of sense and honour. Consider what blessings still remain to you—youth, health, talents, reputation, and, above all, the consciousness of not having by any misconduct of your own brought this misfortune on yourself.

You are richer now, than half of those who dwell in palaces; and you have a wife, who can smile under every untoward change of fortune, provided she may be allow'd to share it with you.

DANVERS.

I have indeed a treasure, richer than all the boasted mines of India can produce!—Yes, my Marianne, your eloquence, surely inspir'd by heav'n, has convinc'd me. Who can resist such an orator in such a cause? Poor! no! I am richer than ever, while I can draw on your love and my own exertions. You are right. The world is wide enough for an honest man to work his way in it, and, when courage is at the oar and love at the helm—

MRS. DANVERS.

There can be no doubt of a prosperous navigation.—Bravo! you even surpass my expectation. Keep up this spirit, and we may look forward to increasing happiness—

Enter Sydenham and Harcourt.

SYDENHAM.

Aye, and enjoy it too when it comes, or I shall be out in my calculations.—Why, Marianne, what have you been doing, child? What's become of the cloud that darken'd your husband's brow? Rain one minute, and sunshine the next?

MRS. DANVERS.

I flatter myself that we shall have nothing but fine weather in future.

SYDENHAM.

How did you bring this about, you little magician?

MRS. DANVERS.

Merely by using, as other magicians do, a few cabalistic words.

DANVERS.

Yes, sir, words indeed of sovereign power to dispel grief, and infuse into my soul invigorating hope. She has taught me to smile on the wreck of that wealth, which I vainly thought my own, and encourag'd me to look forward to scenes of future happiness, render'd doubly estimable by her partaking in them.

SYDENHAM.

That's well said.

DANVERS.

I have youth and resolution on my side, sir, and with these she has convinc'd me I need not despair of rebuilding my fortunes.

HARCOURT.

I have no doubt that you will—but, in whatever way matters may turn out, I apprehend that the lesson of this morning will have taught you more wisdom than,

without it, you might have gain'd in the course of your life. On two points, I am sure, it must carry conviction—

DANVERS.

What may they be?

HARCOURT.

That the best dependence a man can have is on his own virtue and abilities, and that you have the most amiable wife in the world.

DANVERS.

Right, my friend, and the discovery is worth double the price I have paid for it.

SYDENHAM.

As that is the case, I now heartily and from my soul, my dear Marianne, wish you joy of the husband you have provided for yourself; and as for you, Mr. Danvers, I trust your present sentiments are so well founded, that even a return of prosperity may not be able to shake them.

MRS. DANVERS.

I think I can be responsible for him.

SYDENHAM.

That's saying much.

Enter Simon.

SIMON.

Mr. Cognovit, sir, and two ladies.

SYDENHAM.

They shall be waited upon immediately. [*Exit Simon.*]
Now you may have an opportunity of putting your philosophy to the test. Do you feel bold enough to face your enemies?

DANVERS.

I don't apprehend there can be any thing very appalling in their looks.

MRS. DANVERS.

As for me, I am rather curious to see how things go on.

SYDENHAM.

It will certainly be more satisfactory for you to see how they make out their case.—Mr. Harcourt—one word—(*whispers*).

HARCOURT.

I will not forget.

SYDENHAM.

And do you hear?—(*whispers*).

MRS. DANVERS.

What secrets can you two have together?

SYDENHAM.

Never mind.—You'll remember, Mr. Harcourt.

HARCOURT.

You may depend on me.

SYDENHAM.

Mr. Harcourt will be so good as to go with you.—I'll follow directly.

HARCOURT.

Come, madam; this, perhaps, is not a very pleasant business, but I flatter myself it may be the last penance to which the caprice of fortune will subject you.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE III.

Apartment in Sydenham's House.

Enter Cognovit, Mrs. Mactavish, and Peggy.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

I wonder what 'tis gars the folk lenger thus. 'Tis na blait o'em to keep us i'this disrespectfu' way.

COGNOVIT.

They are in no great hurry, I suppose, to give up the property. Natural that, to be sure—can't be blam'd in them.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

They mun be taught to bring doon their spirits to their circumstances. Peur folk like them ha nae right to gi' themselves sic airs o'consequence.

PEGGY.

How can you have the heart to talk of them in that way? For my part, poor souls! I pity them. It must

be a sad thing for two young creturs like them to become poor bodies all of a sudden.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ye talk like a feul as ye are, mess. Ken ye na the proverb, chairity begins at haime?

COGNOVIT.

Very true—very sensibly observ'd indeed. The young lady will know better by and by. Aye, aye, charity certainly does begin at home, and, like other good housewives, the less she goes abroad the better.

MRS. MACTAVISH (*apart to Cognovit*).

A word wi' ye—I hope ye ha' ta'en precowtion to prevent the property fra' ganging to yon lassie.

COGNOVIT.

Hush! Let me alone for that. It's all made over to you.

PEGGY.

That's not manners to whisper in company—

COGNOVIT.

We were only talking about these Danvers's, miss!—By the by, have I brought the deed?—Oh yes! here it is.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

What deed was't ye were speering of?

COGNOVIT.

The deed for Danvers's signature, making over the property to us.

PEGGY.

To you! Why I thought it was to be mine.

COGNOVIT.

To be sure, Miss Marianne—your's or our's—our's or your's—all the same thing you know—merely a technical way of expressing it.

PEGGY.

I don't understand hard words, but I suspect—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Hoot awa, lassie! What mean ye?

COGNOVIT.

Let me speak to the young lady.—My dear Miss Marianne, you entirely miscomprehend this business. No wonder. How should you know any thing of our legal proceedings, so intricate and difficult to understand, that egad! we are sometimes puzzled to make them out ourselves? But, my dear madam, you are in the hands of your best friends—persons who have the tenderest regard for your interests—

PEGGY.

Aye, so you say.

COGNOVIT.

True, upon honour.—But my dear Mrs. Cognovit—those certificates and papers—you've taken care to bring them, I hope.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

They're aw i'my wee chest. Mawrienne, I charg'd ye wi' 'em. Where are they ?

PEGGY.

There, on that table. Safe as when you gave me the box. (*Aside*). That's no lie, I'm sure.

COGNOVIT.

Here come the parties, I protest.

Enter Mr. and Mrs. Danvers, and Harcourt.

HARCOURT.

Mr. Cognovit, your servant—I take it for granted this young lady is Miss Beaufort.

COGNOVIT.

That young lady, sir, is Miss Marianne Beaufort, who comes here to claim, under and by virtue of the last will—

HARCOURT.

You may spare the recapitulation, and it will be more delicate—

DANVERS.

My dear Harcourt, we have made up our minds to our alter'd circumstances, and as to any thing else, it can affect us but little.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

The lad shews his gued sense by taking the matter

i'that way. What signifies greeting and lawmenting, when one can't help oneself?—(*To Danvers*) Y'ere a canny lad, I perceive.

DANVERS.

I know, madam, the penalty which I have incurr'd by marrying this lady—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Troth she's a decent leuking body; though I warrant me she has been brought up in aw manner o' dissipaw-tion and extravagance, ill adapted to her narrow circumstances—

DANVERS.

Such reflections, madam, may be dispens'd with.

MRS. DANVERS.

Pray don't interfere, Mr. Danvers. Nothing which that lady can say can affect me.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ye'll alloo me to say, madam, that the circumstances in which we stond by each ither entitle me to speak my thoughts. Ye mun learn, madam, to bring yeresel doon to yere condition—

PEGGY.

How can you go on in such a way? Don't you see how you dash the young woman?

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Wha bids ye interfere, mess?

PEGGY (*to Mrs. Danvers*).

Don't you mind what she says. There's no need you should be so cast down. 'Tisn't no fault of your's, you know.

MRS. DANVERS.

You're very kind.

PEGGY.

You're a nice pretty girl, and the gemman's a fine handsome gemman. Law! what can the like of you do, now you are poor?

MRS. DANVERS.

I dare say we shall do very well.

PEGGY.

Not you. You can't work for your bread, I'm sure. How should you? You ha'n't been brought up to it, you know. Hang me, if I ha'n't a mind to give you and that handsome gemman there summut to set up in business with.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

What mean ye, lassie? Shall ye be squand'ring awa the property ere ye ha' gotten it?—Maister Cognovit, sir, gang on wi' yeer business; we've nae time to lose wi' sic nonsense.

COGNOVIT.

I only wait for Mr. Sydenham.

HARCOURT.

He will be here soon; but, as you know his sentiments, you had better proceed.

COGNOVIT.

Very true, my good sir, what you say is very just.—As to the clause in the late Mr. Danvers's will, I apprehend, gentlemen, there can be no doubt on that point. Here, gentlemen, is the probate.—You may look it over, Mr. Danvers.

DANVERS (*reads*).

I am satisfied, sir.

HARCOURT.

I suppose there can be no difficulty in proving the young lady's identity?

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Gin ye wou'd mak interrogatory o' that, I ha' it i' my poor, to satisfy ye.—Hand me the wee chest, Mawrienne. Here I've gotten the certificate o' her mither's marriage, an extract fra her ain baptismal register, together wi' ither airticles—

COGNOVIT.

Pray, madam, be sò good as to produce them. Every thing should be made perfectly clear.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Troth shall I, sir—here they are—(*she opens the box*)

and screams)—ah! the poors be gued unto me!—What's som'd o' em?

COGNOVIT.

Of what, madam?

MRS. MACTAVISH.

The certificates and aw the ither proofs—I've been robbed, maister Cognovit—ye ha' thieves i' yeer hoose.

COGNOVIT.

I protest I don't understand you—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

But ye shall understand me, sir—I'll ha' a warrant against aw yeer hoosehold, and against yeersel too—

COGNOVIT (*aside*).

What the deuce are you about?—Consider where, and with whom you are—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

What signifies where I am, and wha these are? Think ye I care for them or for ye?

COGNOVIT.

Nay then there's but one way—Gentlemen, you mustn't mind her.—The poor lady—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Not mind what I say?—I'll gar ye mind me—

COGNOVIT.

I understand, gentlemen, she's apt, poor lady, to be disorder'd in this way sometimes—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Was the like o' that ever heard?

COGNOVIT.

Better not go too near her, Mrs. Danvers.—She looks very wild—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

No, gentlemen, I'm in a perfec state o' sainity, I assure ye—it's aw scandal yon loon tells ye—he ought to tak shame to himsel, to treat his wife sae barbarously—

DANVERS.

What's that, sir? Your wife?

COGNOVIT.

Lord bless me, sir, you mustn't mind what she says in her paroxysm—quite wrong, poor lady, here—(*points to his head*).

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Not his wife!—Look here, gentlemen—when he foond us oot, gentlemen, by his advertizing i' the news, and ascertain'd the right we had to the property, he came roond me wi' his airtfu' manœuvres, and his amorous blawndishments, and sae wrought on my selly credulity, that he cajol'd me untill matrimony—

DANVERS.

Is this true, sir?

COGNOVIT.

Lord, sir, I told you what the poor lady's infirmity was—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

You ought to tak shame to yeersel for saying so—not married indeed!—(to *Danvers*)—Let him contradict it an he con, sir. I ha' evidence o' it. Cast yeer een, sir, on the extract fra the register, which I garr'd the menister gi' me—

DANVERS.

There can be no doubt of the matter—(to *Cognovit*)—so, sir, what am I to think of you? You, who profess'd yourself to be my friend—

MRS. DANVERS.

Who was his father's confidential adviser and sole executor—

HARCOURT.

Who so positively refus'd to assist these ladies in the business—

COGNOVIT.

Well—and pray where's the harm of what I've done? Am I responsible to you? What right or title have you to talk to me in this way?—I advise you, Mr. Danvers, to recollect—

DANVERS.

By heav'n! this is not to be borne—

HARCOURT.

Restrain yourself, my dear friend—

COGNOVIT.

No, no, let him do his worst—let him assault me if he dares—I desire nothing better—

DANVERS.

You are too contemptible for notice. Tell me what remains to be done. Finish your dirty business, and get out of my presence for ever!

COGNOVIT.

All you have to do is to execute this short deed, whereby you relinquish all right and interest—

DANVERS.

Give it me. Where's the pen and ink?

PEGGY.

Stop, sir, one moment. As the old gentleman has prov'd himself a rogue towards you, I'm not sure he mayn't prove himself one towards me too. Pray look at that thing before you sign it, and see who you are going to give the estate to.

DANVERS.

No bad precaution.—Do look it over, Harcourt; you are more conversant with these matters than I am.

HARCOURT.

Let me look at it—

COGNOVIT (*snatching at the deed*).

What's the good of all this?

HARCOURT.

Gently, sir ; give me leave—(*reads*)—hum ?—ha !—on my word, the young lady guess'd shrewdly. This is an absolute conveyance of the whole property to Ephraim Cognovit.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ye infamous, pettifogging—did ye nae tell me the property was aw secur'd to me ?

PEGGY.

Didn't you say it was all secur'd to me ?

COGNOVIT.

I'm not here to answer upon interrogatories. Look you, Mr. Danvers—I'm this lady's husband—there's the deed—refuse to execute it at your peril—I've an account to settle with you. sir—shall sue out a writ instantly—

Enter Latitat.

Oh Latitat ! I'm glad you're come.—Go and call a coach—we must be off this moment, to sue out a writ. Cognovit *versus* Danvers.

LATITAT.

Cognovit *versus* Danvers ?—And pray what has Cognovit to do *versus* Danvers ?—In my mind now, you have no more concern with him than with the Pope of Rome.

COGNOVIT.

Are you out of your senses ?—That deed—he refuses to sign it.

LATITAT.

Does he?—(to *Harcourt*)—Do me the favour, sir, to let me look at it.—(Reads). Oh ho!—Aye, aye—(to *Cognovit*) And did you really want him to sign this here deed?

COGNOVIT.

To be sure I did.

LATITAT.

Then you are the most impudentest fellow alive.—Never you mind him, Mr. Danvers. This here lady (taking *Peggy's hand*) is the only person who has any claim on the property. The conveyance must be made to her and her husband—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Her husband? Is the lad dighted?

LATITAT.

No—the lad's not dighted, nor frighted neither, notwithstanding all your grim looks; and I can tell you more than that—Mrs. Latitat, my dear—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

What say ye?

LATITAT.

I say that this young lady, Miss Marianne Beaufort that was, is now Mrs. Latitat, wife of Larceny Latitat of Furnival's Inn, Esquire.—(To *Peggy*) Isn't what I say true?

PEGGY (*mimicking*).

Let her contradict it an she can, sir—I ha' evidence o'it—cast yere e'en on this extract fra the register, which I garr'd the menister gi'me—

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Was there e'er sic a young imp o'Satan!—This is aw along o'ye, maister Cognovit—

COGNOVIT.

Don't plague me with your nonsense!—Come along, madam—we've nothing to do now, but to set out as fast as we can for Drummanagriskin castle—that's safe at all events—nobody can deprive us of that.—Come along, madam—

Enter Sydenham.

MRS. MACTAVISH (*screams*).

Ah! ah! presarve me! it's his gaist! his gaist! ah! I canna leuk on't!

COGNOVIT.

What the deuce is the matter now? Are you gone mad in good earnest?

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ah I canna leuk on him! Ah dunna let him come near me!

SYDENHAM.

What ails the woman? Do I look like a ghost? I'll

shew you I'm good substantial flesh and blood—there—stand still, and look me in the face.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

The poors presarve me! Maister Beaufort! What should ha' thought o' seing ye here?

LATITAT.

Nay, now the old woman must be out of her senses in good earnest. Beaufort indeed! That's a good one—why this is Squire Sydenham.

SYDENHAM.

The old woman's not so wrong as you suppose.

MRS. DANVERS.

How, sir!—You surprize me.

SYDENHAM.

It's a long story, love, which I'll tell you some other time. It will be enough for you to know now that, soon after I got to Barbadoes, the rich widow Sydenham took a fancy to me, and as, some how or other, she had a whim about keeping her own name, I took it on our marriage, and have kept it ever since.—But how came you to know me, old lady?

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ah waes me! I kenn'd ye but too weel.

SYDENHAM.

Did you?—I don't recollect—but stay—let me look again—I should know something of that face too—why

you're not—yes you are—I'll be hang'd if you're not Jeannet Maclashan, that was Marianne's nurse before I went abroad—I recollect you perfectly.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

I canna contradect it.

COGNOVIT.

And have you had the impudence to palm yourself upon me as a rich widow?—And Drummanagriskin castle too, you old hag? And all the personals—What have you to say, old succubus?

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Dinna fash yoursel—they're aw yere ain, gin ye can find 'em.

COGNOVIT.

Tell me, impostor, what made you fix on me to play your tricks on? How came you to know any thing about the will?

MRS. MACTAVISH.

When I was fall'n peur, I hir'd mysel as assistant tull yere lawndress at chambers. Ain day ye had left yere keys i' the dask, and I thought to examine it's contents. The first thing I met wi' was auld maister Dawnvers's wull.

COGNOVIT.

And where did you find the certificates?

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Gin maister Beaufort shall pairdon me—

SYDENHAM.

I shall make no promises.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ye'll be unco fash'd wi' me, I ken.—The fact is, i' the confusion o' yere packing when ye were ganging until Barbawdoes, I was tempted to appropriate to mysel this wee chest—

SYDENHAM.

My wife's dressing-box, as I live—Open it directly.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Troth shall I. But the contents are aw gone.

SYDENHAM.

How comes that?

MRS. MACTAVISH.

I kenna. I was speering after them, when ye appear'd.

LATITAT.

With your leave, sir, I have summut to say on the subject, after I have paid my respects to this here young lady.

PEGGY.

What have you to say to me, pray?

LATITAT.

In the first place, an't you that old woman's niece?

PEGGY.

No.

LATITAT.

No! What are you then?

PEGGY.

That old woman's daughter.

LATITAT.

Worser and worser still!—And how did you dare to pass yourself off as a rich heiress?

PEGGY.

What right have you to talk to me in that manner? I'd have you to know, Peggy Maclashan's a match every day in the week for Larceny Latitat of Furnival's-Inn.

SYDENHAM.

Come, sir, tell us what you know about the papers.

LATITAT.

What would you say, now, if I were to be of some service to you in this business?

COGNOVIT.

(*To Latitat.*) You're not going to peach?

LATITAT.

Going to peach?—Yes, I am.—Here, Mr. Sydenham, are your papers. I got that girl to smug them for me out of the old woman's box.

MRS. MACTAVISH.

Ah Paggy, Paggy! Hoo were ye cawpable o' doing sae wicked a thing?

PEGGY.

Ah mother, mother ! I only did as you taught me.

SYDENHAM.

You have answer'd her properly.—Mr. Latitat, go on with your evidence.

COGNOVIT.

(*To Latitat.*) I hope you don't mean to tell 'em—

LATITAT.

What ! tampering with the witness?—All fair and above board, if you please.—Mr. Danvers, sir, as you hav'n't settled your minority account with this honest gentleman, perhaps you may like to know you've a balance in your favour of upwards of thirty thousand pounds.

SYDENHAM.

Egad ! we shall set about the inclosure with some spirit now.—Thirty thousand, d'ye say ?

COGNOVIT.

It's false—the fellow has trumped up a story—

LATITAT.

You shall hear what a story I have trumped up.—Here's an exact copy of your account, debtor and creditor. The vouchers are all safe at my chambers. I took the liberty of removing them there, for fear of accidents, when I went to town this morning to be married.

SYDENHAM.

This is most important indeed.—(*To Cognovit*)—What have you to say for yourself?

COGNOVIT.

Sir, I shall say nothing at present. I shall reserve my defence for a more proper occasion.

SYDENHAM.

That occasion, be assur'd, shall not be wanting. No one can be more fit to be made an example of. It's from a few fellows of your description, that obloquy has been thrown on one of our most liberal professions. A few rank weeds in a field, however, are no proof that the soil or the harvest are bad; and every honourable lawyer, as well as every honourable man, will concur in plucking them out.—Who waits there?—(*Enter Servants*).—Take these two persons into custody. See they don't escape.—Away with you!

[*Exeunt Cognovit, Mrs. Mactavish, and Servants.*]

As for you two—

MRS. DANVERS.

I must say one word in favour of this young woman. I am willing to think she has been misled by bad example, and may be reclaim'd.

SYDENHAM.

What makes you think so?

MRS. DANVERS.

Her behaviour to me just now. When she thought Danvers and I were ruin'd, she offer'd to give us enough to set up in business.

SYDENHAM.

Did she? There may be some good in her indeed.—Well, girl, if you behave well—And you, sir, when will you bring us the vouchers?

LATITAT.

You shall have 'em to-morrow morning.

SYDENHAM.

'Tis well. Act honestly towards us, and lay aside your knavish tricks, and we'll see what can be done for you and your wife.—And now, my dear friends, we have nothing more to do than to set about our rural improvements, and to be as happy and comfortable as ease, independence, and good humour can make us.

[*Exeunt Omnes.*]

THE END.



THE
BANDIT.
A COMEDY.

Interdum tamen et vocem Comœdia tollit.

HORACE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

BARON STOLBERG, ... Palatine of Stolberg.
COUNT RODOLPH, An Hungarian Nobleman.
ARNOLD, Captain of the Banditti.
HERMAN, His Brother.
DITMAR, Physician at Stolberg Castle.
HOUSDORFF, Gamekeeper there.
FINCK, }
SWARTZ, } Banditti.
GORTZ, }
IDA, Niece of Baron Stolberg.
AGATHA, Housekeeper at Stolberg Castle.
Banditti, Huntsmen, Servants.

Scene—Hungary.

THE
B A N D I T.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Court-yard of Stolberg Castle.

Enter Housdorff and Huntsmen.

HOUSDORFF.

COME ON! O'er yonder eastern cliff the dawn
Spreads it's first beams—'tis time we were abroad.
Sound your loud bugles, let the battlements
Of Stolberg Castle ring with your acclaim,
'Till ev'ry drowsy inmate start from slumber,
To meet the morn upon the mountain top!

(The Huntsmen sound.)

Enter Baron Stolberg.

BARON.

Welcome, my gallant friends ! Why this shews well.
What ! thou here, Housdorff ! Still alert as ever ?

HOUSDORFF.

Aye, my good lord ; though time has thinn'd my hair,
And over what remains has spread his snow,
I still am heart-whole : let the merry horn
Give but the note of preparation,
And Housdorff still is found among the first.

BARON.

That's bravely said. Thy heartiness, old man,
Makes me forget my age, and think myself
Young, as when first thine hand lac'd on my cuirass,
To meet the Turk who menac'd our destruction.
Those were brave days ; but they are gone, and now
Life's autumn creeps upon me, my sere leaves
Begin to drop apace, and nought remains
To cheer my closing scene, but the fond hope
Of my lov'd Ida's future happiness.

HOUSDORFF.

That seems beyond a doubt. Train'd up by you
With more than father's care—

BARON.

Hold, my good friend ;

That is a string which jars whene'er 'tis touch'd.
I was indeed a father ; these moist eyes
Once look'd upon a son ; these feeble arms
Held out my heir to my surrounding vassals,
Their future leader—

HOUSDORFF.

Blisters on my tongue,
For thus renewing recollections
So hostile to your peace ! Yet, sooth to say,
He was a lovely boy.

BARON.

He was my pride :
But that was humbled to the dust. These walls,
Those wide domains, which from a splendid race
Of gallant ancestors devolv'd on me,
Will never own the sway of my descendants ;
My very name must perish—

HOUSDORFF.

Nay, my lord,
From the alliance you're about to form
Between Count Rodolph and your lovely niece
It long may live.

BARON.

I have no other hope.
But truce with these reflections. Mark ! the sun
Climbs o'er yon eastern hill, and mocks our slowness.

Let your loud bugles once more hail the day,
And call our ling'ring bridegroom from his couch.

*(The Huntsmen sound their bugles, and exeunt with
Housdorff).*

Enter Ida.

My Ida! welcome. Why, my girl, thou look'st
Like Dian's self, when on Taygetus' brow
She led her sportive train to chase the deer
That browz'd on it's green summits. By my faith,
Lord Rodolph does thee wrong, my lovely girl,
To be thus tardy, when his ev'ry moment,
His ev'ry thought, should be ingross'd by thee.

IDA.

Nay, my good lord, you tax him much too highly.
Your humble Ida has no right to claim
Th' exclusive homage which, long e'er he knew her,
He had devoted to a worthier object.

BARON.

What's that you say? A worthier object?

IDA.

Aye,

One whose perfections he with pride confesses,
On whom he doats, on whose deserts his tongue
Grows eloquent—

BARON.

Indeed! Who is this rival?

IDA.

And don't you really know? Can't you discover,
'Tis my lord Rodolph's self?

BARON.

Hey?—how?—his self?

Well, thou'rt a merry girl—yet, on my life,
I thought thou wast in earnest.

IDA.

So I am :

Look at him—hear him speak—at home, abroad,
To whom are his attentions paid?—Himself!
Whose teeth, whose shape, whose elegance and taste
Doth he e'er deign to notice, but his own?
Whose repartees does he repeat? His own!
Whose ease does he consult? His own, his own!
At once his idol and his idol's priest,
At his own shrine he offers sacrifice,
With purer adoration than to heav'n.

BARON.

No more of this, I pray. It passes jest.
He is a nobleman of high desert,
Much favour'd by his prince, whom I have chosen
To join with thee in all my rich succession.
I have no son, my love, and would adopt him
To comfort my old age, and share thy task
Of filial tenderness.

IDA.

I would my heart
Could ratify the vow my tongue must utter.

BARON.

Why what is this? The match is excellent.

IDA.

I cannot bring myself to like him, sir;
There is a something indescribable,
At which my heart revolts whene'er I think
I am to call him husband.

BARON.

Here's a turn!

IDA.

I do beseech you, sir, compel me not—

BARON.

Refuse a nobleman like him!—I love you,
You know I do—

IDA.

If you did love me, sir,
You'd not condemn me thus to misery.

BARON.

Was the like ever heard? Heav'n grant me patience!
I tell you he's a fitting match—But hush!
See where the Count approaches.

Enter Count Rodolph.

Why, my lord,

You're tardy this fine morning. Heard you not
Our merry bugles summon you a field,
To try the covers, ere the early dew
Had left the tainted grass?

RODOLPH.

Why yes, my lord,
I heard them, quite as much as I desir'd.
If this be your idea of amusement,
To let a braying post-horn interrupt
One's morning slumbers, I protest that I
Would rather be excus'd from sharing it.
'Tis strangely gothic!

BARON.

As your lordship pleases—
There's no accounting for these differences
In gentlemen's opinions. But the chace
Has ever been esteem'd war's truest emblem,
The school in which the youthful soldier learns
The rudiments of that sublime profession
Which leads him on to fame.

RODOLPH.

So much the worse.
It is a bad apprenticeship, my lord,
To a worse trade.

BARON.

What can your lordship mean?

I'm at a loss to comprehend—Why now,
You are yourself a soldier. Pray how come
Your theory and practice thus at variance?

RODOLPH.

There are some things, my lord, which all who bear
A certain rank in life are forc'd to do.
No gentleman, who values reputation,
Can decline serving. 'Tis as much the fashion,
As the pelisse or boot.

BARON.

Is it indeed?

'Tis lucky that the mode takes such a turn.
But come, my lord—methinks you might as well—
That is, if fashion don't prohibit it—
Take some small notice of your future bride.

RODOLPH.

My lady Ida! I protest I did not
See you before. Who could expect you here?
And in this garb too, Amazonian quite,
And arm'd as if for battle.

IDA.

Aye, my lord,
Equipp'd as suits a huntress. Follow me,
And I'll engage to shew you some diversion.

RODOLPH.

Follow you, ma'am? I vow I'm petrified.

A lady of your sort thus to unite
 With low plebeians in their barb'rous sports!—
 Nay, ma'm, I'm serious. Give me leave to tell you,
 Lord Rodolph's bride—

IDA.

And give me leave, my lord,
 To tell you, that, as I'm not yet your bride,
 You have no right to chide me. When I am,
 Humanity and sense should teach you better.
 I ask your pardon if I make too free,
 But long indulgence here perhaps has spoilt me.
 I am a strange wild girl, but I may learn,
 Provided my instructor pleases me.

BARON.

Aye, I'll be sworn thou wilt.—But come—we lose
 Our time. By this, our scouts have driv'n the wood.
 Conduct your bride, my lord. Our steeds are ready.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

*Interior of the Banditti's Cavern. At the farther end, a
 Stair descending from a Trap-door.*

Enter Finck, Gortz, and another.

FINCK (*throwing down a bundle*).

So—lie thou there.—Come, cast your burthens down—
 Our trade grows hardly worth the following.

One might, for any reasonable hope
Of profit, turn an honest man and work.

GORTZ.

Why truly, master Finck, considering
The wheel and gallows stare us in the face,
Our gains are of the smallest. I remember
When, in a morning's ramble through the forest,
A gentleman might easily bring home
A decent booty—half a dozen purses,
A watch or so—

FINCK.

I tell thee, master Gortz,
The public's in confed'racy to cheat us.
But let 'em look to it—I know a trick
Or two to make us even.

Enter Arnold.

ARNOLD.

What! so soon
Return'd? I look'd not for you these two hours.
Where did you leave your comrades?

FINCK.

When we came

To the old oak, where the two roads branch off,
The morning broke. Myself, with Gortz and Carl,
Agreed to take the western range; but, spite
Of all our trouble, we could meet with nothing.

But a poor pedlar and a scurvy priest,
Who hardly paid our pains in stripping them.
If all they had will bring us in five ducats,
I'll suffer the strappado.—There—look at it—

(A bugle from without.

ARNOLD.

Hark! 'tis our comrades' signal.

FINCK.

They come back too?

Swartz and other Banditti descend.

ARNOLD.

You're welcome, gentlemen. What news do ye bring?

SWARTZ.

The worst that gentlemen like us can bring.
We've had our labour for our pains,

ARNOLD.

How so?

SWARTZ.

The devil must have ow'd us an old grudge,
And paid it off to-day with interest.
All seem'd to promise us a fair campaign;
The morn was fine and clear, the roads were good,
And passengers in plenty might be look'd for.
We rode on in high spirits, when at distance
We saw a mighty troop, and heard the horns
And shouts of hunters. Suddenly we halted,

And Hugo singly rode to reconnoitre.
They prov'd the Baron Stolberg and his suite.
He treats some nobles with a hunting match
Here in the forest. This being known, 'twas clear
We had no bus'ness there ; so we came back.

ARNOLD.

Where's Herman ?

SWARTZ.

Far enough ere this, I warrant.
Instead of turning homewards, he preferr'd
To make one in the chace.

ARNOLD.

To join the chace ?
The very dress he wore would cause discov'ry.

SWARTZ.

I guess'd you'd say so ; but he had a trick
To pass unnotic'd 'mong 'em. We had chanc'd
To meet, ere broke the day, a peasant youth,
Drest in his gayest suit, as he inform'd us,
To meet his bride at the next parish church.
We let him go to keep his assignation,
After we'd stript him of his finery.
I laugh whene'er I think on't.

ARNOLD.

Well—proceed.

SWARTZ.

When Herman took a fancy to remain,
I counsell'd him to doff his uniform,
And take the bridegroom's suit. No sooner said
Than done. Egad! the change became him well,
And look'd more natural for a lad like him,
Than our buff jerkin.

FINCK.

True—for a young fellow
Brought up to th' trade, and born as 'twere among us,
I never met his equal for the lack
Of all that's needful for our noble calling.

ARNOLD.

Nay, Finck, I pray you speak not of him thus.
Remember he's my brother, and a youth
Of high and rare endowments.

FINCK.

Noble captain,
I meant no harm; but, by Saint Anthony,
He bears no likeness to the family.
Why now, there was your father—he was captain
When first I join'd the troop. A bolder fellow
No troop in Hungary could boast. And then
As for yourself, whom, on his death, we chose
To be our leader, we have no objections
To make against you.

ARNOLD.

No?

FINCK.

No, none to speak of.

When you were private in the troop, you took
Your fair proportion of the toil and danger,
And now you're captain, why you do your duty,
And keep up discipline. But as for Herman,
He may be well enough perhaps for courage,
But, truly, my young sir is pitiful,
And feels compunctions—

ARNOLD.

Nay, sir—

FINCK.

If a fellow

Resist us, or refuse to give his purse,
When by the laws of war we're warranted
To knock him on the head, he'll let him go,
And preach against the sinfulness of murder.
Your father should have made a priest of him,
For he can ne'er do credit to our order.

ARNOLD.

Give o'er these taunts—'tis sign you know him not,
Nor can appreciate merit such as his.
Nay, silence, sir! no man shall dare asperse
His character, while my hand wields a sword.

SWARTZ.

I pray you, noble captain, be appeas'd.
(*To Finck*) Must it be ever so?—(*to Arnold*)—What say
you, captain,
Shall we adjourn to th' refectory? The keen air
Has giv'n me appetite:

FINCK.

Your pardon, captain.

ARNOLD.

No more.—Come, gentlemen, a gen'rous glass
Will make you think less of your disappointment.
(*To Finck*) Your hand—in a full brimmer you shall
pledge me
To Herman's pleasant chace and safe return. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

The Forest.

*Enter Baron Stolberg, Count Rodolph, Housdorff, and
Hunters.*

HOUSDORFF.

This way, my lords—your horses are at hand,
Ready to mount if wanted.

BARON.

Are you sure
The lady Ida is securely plac'd?

She's mounted on a courser of high spirit,
And, when the game is started, he may take
Some little liberties.

Enter a Huntsman.

HUNTSMAN.

My lord, all's ready—
We have dislodg'd a boar from yonder cover—
The hounds are now at bay.

BARON.

Set forward then !
Come on, my lord, we'll shew you glorious sport !

[Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.

Another Part of the Forest.

Enter Herman.

HERMAN.

Thus far auspiciously I've held my course,
Thanks to this borrow'd garb, whose honest shew
Is more in unison with Herman's feelings
Than that to which harsh fate has destin'd him.
Thank heav'n ! I've gain'd a temporary freedom,
Can view the glorious sun, without a blush
To think myself unworthy of his beams.
Now may my cherish'd wish be gratified.
I've read of knights and deeds of martial prowess,

'Till my whole soul was fir'd : now may I see
 Their vaunted worth exemplified in him,
 Who o'er these precincts holds his princely sway.
 Where art thou, gallant Stolberg ! Vainly still
 I've track'd thee by the distant bugle's sound.
 Oh that propitious fortune had but made me
 The meanest vassal who fills up thy train !
 Then from thy bright example might my soul
 Have caught a kindred feeling, and aspir'd
 To emulate the glory which inflames it.—
 Hark ! hark ! again the peal begins—and now
 It louder grows, mix'd with the cheering cry
 Of men and dogs.—What's that?—A piercing shriek
 As if of sudden anguish !—There again—
 Immortal pow'rs ! what see I ?—A young female,
 With hair disshevell'd, fruitlessly attempting
 To rein a fiery steed, who hurries her
 Tow'rd's yon precipitous and fatal gulph—
 Aid me, ye pow'rs ! I fly to succour her ! [Exit.

SCENE V.

Another Part of the Forest.

Enter Herman bearing Ida.

HERMAN.

She breathes ! she lives ! oh ! for some friendly spring,
 Whose freshness may restore suspended life !—

See where one trickles from the rock!—Pure liquid!
 Thus on a purer form I sprinkle thee.
 She moves—again the circulating blood
 Revisits her pale cheeks.—Bright excellence!
 For surely charms like thine ne'er met the glance
 Of wond'ring mortal—while suspended yet
 Thy vital pow'rs, while thou canst not behold
 And chide my fond presumption, let me kneel,
 And pay thee bounden adoration. [*He kneels.*]

IDA.

Ah me! Where am I?—Who art thou, young stranger,
 And wherefore kneel'st thou?

HERMAN.

Lady, I am one
 By far too humble to boast other merit,
 Than that of having sav'd thee from destruction.

IDA.

Oh! was it thou?—The soul-appalling scene
 Now rushes on my mem'ry. I had perish'd,
 But for thy timely aid. Tell me thy name.
 The Baron Stolberg has a heart to feel
 The merits of his niece's brave preserver.

HERMAN.

The Baron Stolberg! Art thou then that Ida,
 Whose beauties form the theme of ev'ry tongue?
 Thou must! none else can arrogate resemblance

To nature's primest work !—Forgive me, madam,
 If I presume too far. My humble wish
 Soars not beyond the hope that I may live
 In thy remembrance : more befits not him,
 Who, though he dare to gaze on thy perfection,
 Feels conscious of his own unworthiness.

IDA.

Thy mien, thy bearing, ev'ry word, proclaim
 Thou art not what thou seem'st. A peasant's son
 Cannot inherit sentiments like thine.
 I pray thee tell me who thou art? I ask not
 From curiosity, but from a wish
 To know the name of one, whose high desert
 I've had such cause to appreciate.

HERMAN.

Noble lady,
 I cannot speak my name or my condition.
 I pray thee ask not why.—There is a cause
 Too forcible—

IDA.

If there be such a cause,
 Whate'er my wish to know you, I respect it
 Too much to press upon you ; but I trust
 A time may come—

HERMAN.

Never, I fear!

IDA.

Why so?

If the cause spring not from disgrace or guilt,
Time may remove it. That, your modest valour,
And your ingenuous countenance forbid
E'en to suppose.

HERMAN.

Oh spare, in pity spare me!

I must not—cannot—I beseech your pardon—
I mean not to offend—

IDA.

Indeed you do not.

I am indebted to you, sir, far more
Than words can ever pay; promise me then
You will not always thus conceal yourself.
When in due time you may reveal your name,
Honour, I pray, our castle with your presence.
Meantime, sir, from my finger take this ring;
Wear it as a pledge of Ida's gratitude,
And, when you look upon it, think of her.

HERMAN.

From Ida's hand a pledge! 'Fore heav'n! I swear
I'll wear it ever as a sacred charm
To guide me on to honour. Yes, fair maid!
I will obey thee. When I dare approach
Thy blest abode, I shall not need concealment.

Who are these approaching?

IDA.

They are friends,

less in search of me.

HERMAN.

You then are safe.

not stay to meet them. Gracious lady!

Let thy remembrance light upon me,

thy for my fortunes mingle with it.

Tell! may angels guard thee!

[Exit.

IDA.

Gallant youth!

sweetly, but how mournfully he spoke!

Let me know more of him—

Enter Housdorff and Hunters.

HOUSDORFF.

Thank heav'n, you're found!

Safe I hope, and well.

IDA.

I am. But say,

Who is my uncle?

HOUSDORFF.

He is near at hand.

Was exceedingly alarm'd. The Count—

IDA.

Would he attempt to succour me?

L. I.

R

HOUSDORFF.

No, ma'am,
He's yonder with my lord, but he bad us
Set out in search of you.

IDA.

I thank him for't.
Could not a spark of gallant feeling touch
That heart, insensible to all but self?
It was not thus my brave deliv'rer acted.
Heav'ns, what a contrast!

HOUSDORFF.

Will it please you, madam,
To join my lord? He anxiously expects you.

IDA.

He's always kind.—I'm ready.—Shew the way.

[Exeunt.]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in Stolberg Castle.

Enter Baron Stolberg and Agatha.

BARON.

WELL, Agatha, how fares your mistress now?

AGATHA.

Please your good lordship, she is much recover'd,
Thanks to Saint Bridget for it, and the saints
Who sav'd her precious life. Now blessings on her!
Would your good lordship think it? When I wish'd her
To take a posset of my own preparing,
And try to sleep an hour or so, in order
To quiet and compose her troubled spirits,
As I'm a sinner, 'stead of heeding me,
She bad me bring her robe—your lordship knows it—
The white and silver which your lordship gave her—
It does become her mainly, that's the truth on't—

BARON.

I am right glad to hear it. 'Tis a sign
She has not suffer'd from her accident.

AGATHA.

No, the good saints be prais'd, I'll warrant me.
For my part I'd have sworn, to look at her,
Instead of running risks—I vow it makes me
Shudder whene'er I think on't—she had met
With something to amuse her. 'Stead of moping,
And looking sad, and sighing, as, poor thing!
She has done of late, I know not why I'm sure,
She has got such a fresh colour in her cheeks,
Which comes and goes so prettily, and her eyes
So sparkle—But I vow I had forgot—
I've such a memory!—My lady charg'd me
To pay her humble duty to your lordship,
And ask admittance to your lordship's presence.

BARON.

Why truly, Agatha, thou hast the knack
Of expeditiously obeying orders.
Try if thou can'st as nimbly hie thee back,
And certify my niece I wish to see her.
No ceremony, pray thee—I dispense
With courtesies—there—get thee gone, and do it.

[*Exit Agatha.*]

Thank heav'n, she has not suffer'd!—I have plac'd
My single stake of hope on this dear child,
And, if I lose her, I must lose my all.
Well! I have match'd her to my heart's content:

The Count indeed has rather the advantage
In point of years ; had he been somewhat younger
It had not been amiss ; she might perhaps
Have lik'd him better ; and, it must be own'd
He has a few particularities,
A kind of cold formality about him,
Not captivating. To speak truth of him,
He is the coolest bridegroom—So, my Ida !

Enter Ida.

Tell me, my dearest, how was't you escap'd ?

IDA.

Oh, sir ! the mere idea still appals me.
When from his cover by the hounds arous'd
The boar rush'd forth, my courser starting mock'd
My feeble force, and with the light'ning's speed
Bore me across the plain, and up the steep,
Which with precipitous descent o'erhangs
The farther wood. Death, cloath'd in tenfold horrors,
Seem'd seated on it's brow, prepar'd to seize me ;
And doubtless I had perish'd, had not heav'n
In mercy sent a guardian angel down—

BARON.

Egad ! your history commences well.
No wonder you escap'd. Perhaps, however,
We may attribute your deliverance

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L. H. [REDACTED]

1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered. This involves understanding the context and the specific requirements of the task.

1900-1901

~~I am sorry to hear of your loss~~

544

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She is a very good person and I have been

There, however, all rights, be forever null.

Find the big grassy area with many ridges.

YF 1000 and other apparatus and hardware being sold are stored

He caught me in his measuring arms and sav'd me.

BARON.

He was indeed a gallant youth.—Go on.

IDA.

Terror had lock'd my senses in a swoon ;
But soon as they return'd, I felt myself
Safely reposing on a mossy bank,
While, at respectful distance, my preserver
Knelt, as if rapt in sacred extacy,
His fine eyes fix'd on me, and his stretch'd hands
Rais'd as in silent gratitude to heav'n.
He spoke not, but methought his modest silence
Had more of eloquence than words could give.

BARON.

Why certainly, my love, there are occasions
When silence says the most.

IDA.

I thought so, sir :
But, when I spoke to him, and gave him thanks
For his most timely service, had you heard
With what ingenuous grace he answer'd me,
How gallantly he strove to under-rate
His own deservings, you'd have thought his life
Had all been past in courts, so dignified,
So polish'd were his manners and his phrase.
You'd have been charm'd with him ; I'm sure you would.

BARON.

If he be such as you describe him, love,
I know not but I might. I long to learn
More of this gallant youth. What is his name?

IDA.

That, sir, I cannot tell you.

BARON.

No! Why not?

IDA.

I told him you'd be anxious to discover
Who had conferr'd such obligation on me—

BARON.

Most certainly.

IDA.

I therefore pray'd he would
Disclose himself.

BARON.

Well—what said he?

IDA.

He said

He could not.

BARON.

No?—Pray did he tell you why?

IDA.

He said he had a cause for keeping silence,
But what that cause was he declin'd to say.

'Twas something which I'm sure must trouble him,
For, when he mention'd it, he look'd so sad,
It griev'd me to behold him,

BARON.

It seems strange
A peasant should have mystery about him.

IDA.

From all he said, I could not but conjecture
He was not what his mean exterior shew'd.
There was an air of nobleness about him,
A grace and elegance—

BARON.

Odso! I have it.
Handsome he was, you say?

IDA.

Yes, very handsome.

BARON.

His mien and manners elegant, his phrases
Refin'd and polish'd? Ten to one, my girl,
He's some young nobleman, who, to avoid
The consequence of an affair of honour,
Has in a peasant's garb fled to these mountains.

IDA.

It is—it must be as you say.

BARON.

I've known

The very same thing happen ; nay, when I
 Wounded my foe Count Walstein in a duel,
 I quitted Presburg for a time, and grew
 A sojourner in lonely woods and forests.
 But I had not the luck, like our young champion,
 To succour damsels in distress, nor can I
 Flatter myself I look'd like an Adonis.

IDA.

The more I think of it, the more I'm sure
 You've guess'd him rightly.

BARON.

Child, I know the world.
 A gentleman, disguise him as you will,
 Must soon be known.

Enter Count Rodolph.

Oh, Count ! I'm glad you're come.
 I wish'd to see you.

RODOLPH.

With your lordship's leave,
 I would inquire of lady Ida's health.
 I hope, ma'am, you're recover'd, that your fright
 Has not too much affected your poor nerves.

IDA.

My nerves are much indebted to your lordship.
 I hope your own exertions to protect me
 Have not much ruffled yours.

RODOLPH.

Exertions, madam?

IDA.

How gen'rous 'tis so quickly to forget
Your chivalrous behaviour.

RODOLPH.

Really, madam,
I—I—that is—pray what could I have done?

IDA.

I know a person who could tell you.

RODOLPH.

Aye?

Who is the gentleman?

BARON.

That's what we wish
Ourselves to learn. From her description of him,
There's ground to think him other than he seems.

RODOLPH.

The case of many others. Pray how seems he?

BARON.

A peasant swain.

RODOLPH.

I'm thankful to you, madam,
For your intended compliment.—A peasant
Instruct me? And in what, I beg to know.

IDA.

In gallantry, my lord; perhaps in more.

RODOLPH.

Your ladyship has a privilege to speak—
But really there's a harshness and a force
In what you're pleas'd to say—

BARON.

She's rather flurried

By her late accident; and 'tis no wonder
She strongly feels the services of one
To whom she is indebted for her life.
I was devising what we can do for him.

RODOLPH.

'Tis plain. There is but one way of repaying
Such obligations to such vulgar fellows.

IDA.

Such vulgar fellows!—Pray, my lord, what right
Have you to term him so?

RODOLPH.

Ma'am, I conceive
My phrase was quite correct. A boor, a clown,
Is, ever was, and ever will be class'd
Among the vulgar herd.

IDA (*aside*).

Presumptuous coxcomb!

There's no enduring him.—(*To the Baron.*)—With your
permission

I will withdraw.

RODOLPH.

What! is your ladyship

About to leave us? May I have the honour

Of your fair hand?

IDA.

My lord, I can dispense

With your attendance.

[*Exit.*]

RODOLPH.

This is mighty strange!

BARON.

You must forgive th' effect of agitation.

She means no harm, believe me.

RODOLPH.

To refuse

My service!

BARON.

Psha! 'Twas nothing, I assure you.

We must pass over twenty things like this.

RODOLPH.

My lord, there's such a thing as etiquette.

BARON.

I'm mighty sorry for it—'tis a thing

Which might be well dispens'd with.

RODOLPH.

How, my lord?

BARON.

Come, come—nay, never mind this small fracas.
Let us walk through th' apartments, and inspect
How far our preparations are advanc'd.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Interior of the Banditti's Cavern.

Enter Arnold.

ARNOLD.

Would Herman were return'd! Howe'er disguis'd,
Discov'ry may ensue. I marvel not
His inborn feelings thus should work on him
To seek emancipation from the crew
Of wretches who surround us—hark! his signal—

Enter Herman from the Trap-door.

Hast thou partaken of the Baron's sport?

HERMAN.

No!

ARNOLD.

Thou'rt unfortunate.

HERMAN.

Unfortunate!

Call him unfortunate, who from the gloom
 Of a dark dungeon mounts a princely throne!
 Lament his fate, who from the-torturing rack
 Of stern inquisitors is borne to heav'n!
 My triumph's greater far than theirs, my labours
 More glorious, and my bliss more exquisite.
 Brother! these arms have grasp'd an angel's form;
 These eyes have gaz'd on more than human charms,
 And in my soul are lodg'd a seraph's words!

ARNOLD.

Prithee be more compos'd.

HERMAN.

Impossible!

Composure suits not with a bliss like mine.
 A tide of transport rushes on my heart,
 My blood's on fire, my brain turns round with joy!—
 Dost see?—(*shewing the Ring.*)

ARNOLD.

A diamond, lustrous as the sun.

HERMAN.

Nor sun, nor all the heav'nly luminaries
 Can match her brilliancy who plac'd it there.

ARNOLD.

Was it a woman's gift?

HERMAN.

Aye, such a woman,

As may dispute the palm of loveliness
 With rival goddesses, and win the prize.
 I saw her hurried by her fiery steed
 To the steep verge of a deep precipice,
 Wherein to fall was death. Heav'n gave me speed
 To outstrip her courser and to save her. Oh!
 How sweet, how heav'nly was her smile, when first
 She call'd me her deliv'rer! It pervaded
 My whole existence; to my inmost soul
 I felt it's genial influence. Oh my brother!
 Cull ev'ry beauty which rich nature knows,
 Add ev'ry charm imagination pictures,
 Still will she far transcend them all!

ARNOLD.

Who?

HERMAN.

Ida!

Ida of Stolberg!

ARNOLD (*aside*).

Stolberg! gracious heav'n!

What may this tend to?—(*To Herman.*)—Did I hear thee
 rightly?

Ida of Stolberg?

HERMAN.

Yes, my Arnold, she—

The paragon of female excellence,

The day-star of my hope—

ARNOLD.

Hath she then giv'n you hope?

HERMAN.

Aye—but 'tis such

As the wreck'd seaman feels, when o'er his bark
The wild waves beat, and 'twixt the land and him
The boist'rous surges lash th' impervious rocks.
She deign'd to bid me think of her—nay more—
She call'd me her preserver, glorious name!
And said she never, never would forget me.
She bad me visit her—

ARNOLD.

And wilt thou?

HERMAN.

Can I—

Can Herman, the vile inmate of this cavern,
Th' associate of banditti, visit her?

ARNOLD.

No—not the bandit Herman, not the inmate
Of this detested cavern—(*aside*)—How it wrings
My heart with anguish to behold him thus—
(*To Herman*) Herman—(*aside*)—But hold—it may not be.

HERMAN.

What mean'st thou?

ARNOLD.

I have been thinking, Herman, if indeed
Th' impression made upon thy feeling heart
Be such as time or absence cannot change,
Means may be found to raise thee to a level
With her, who now seems so far rais'd above thee.

HERMAN.

Nay, feed me not with visionary hope.

ARNOLD.

I mean it not. Though fate appear to have plac'd
A barrier 'twixt thy tow'ring hopes and thee,
The world is ample; there are paths enough
On its wide surface that conduct to honour.
Thou hast a soldier's fortune, thy good sword:
Seek some more distant, more propitious shore,
Where as a stranger thou may'st win renown,
And prove thyself deserving of her love.

HERMAN.

There's magic in the sound! The glorious thought
Fills my whole soul, and goads me on to action.

ARNOLD.

Set forth. Where'er thy destiny may lead thee,
True to the bonds which knit our kindred souls,
Thy brother will be partner in thy fortunes;
With thee will he abjure these haunts of guilt,

Wash out the stain, which hath too long debas'd
The once illustrious name his lineage bore,
And re-assert the honours of his race.

HERMAN.

Thanks, my best brother!—yes—we'll go together.
Methinks already from my lab'ring bosom
A mountain is remov'd; my heart beats freely,
Through my whole frame with renovated vigour
My life-blood flows, already float before me
Visions of glory and propitious love!—
When shall our vent'rous course commence? To-morrow?

ARNOLD.

To-day—this hour.

HERMAN.

Agreed. But let me first
Revisit Stolberg's precinct, thus disguis'd,
If haply I may catch a parting glance
Of my soul's empress! 'Twould methinks inspire me,
With new-born ardour for our enterprize.

ARNOLD.

Away then—but conceal thyself I pray;
Breathe not suspicion of thy present state,
But, hap what may, preserve thy secret.—Swear it.

HERMAN.

I swear.

ARNOLD.

Go then, and heav'n thy progress speed!

[*Excunt severally.*]

SCENE III.

*A Bower in the Castle Garden.**Enter Ida, followed by Count Rodolph.*

IDA.

My lord, I pray you follow me not thus.

I would be private.

RODOLPH.

Nay, fair lady, hear me.

IDA.

Not now. There are occasions better suited—

RODOLPH.

What can suit better for a lover's purpose
Than this sequester'd bow'r?—By this fair hand—

IDA.

What means this freedom, sir?

RODOLPH.

Why thus obdurate?

IDA.

My lord, I do implore you leave me.

RODOLPH.

How!

Leave you?

IDA.

I would be mistress of my thoughts
And of myself.

RODOLPH.

Allow me, ma'am, to tell you,
No lady but yourself could have the pow'r
To make me stoop to supplicate an audience.

IDA.

My lord, 'tis a pre-eminence I court not.

RODOLPH.

Permit me to observe, those scornful airs
Are misapplied. Count Rodolph is a man
Who feels his dignity—

IDA.

I would he were
As fully sensible of the respect
Due to a woman's feelings.

RODOLPH.

I presume
You have forgotten, madam, that to-morrow
Gives me a husband's right—

IDA.

I know no right
To-morrow can confer, which justifies
The threat those words convey. But know, my lord,

Whatever claims to-morrow may bring with it,
To-day I'm mistress of myself. Your lordship
Is too well-bred to need another hint.

RODOLPH.

Yes, haughty madam, yes, I understand you.
'Tis now your turn. But, madam, recollect
To-morrow—then my turn will come. You see
I can give hints too.—So, 'till then, farewell!

[*Exit.*

IDA.

Thank heav'n, he's gone!—Was ever such assurance?
A thing like him to threaten, talk of rights!
It was not such a mockery of man,
Who at the peril of his life sav'd mine.
No, bravest of thy sex, and, since none witness
My fond confession, save the heav'nly spirits
Who read my thoughts—the loveliest—the most lov'd!
Oh! say, why should'st thou veil thy high desert,
Why thus in rude concealment shroud the worth,
Which might adorn and dignify a throne!

Enter Herman.

HERMAN.

Lady, if once again—

IDA.

How! my deliverer!

HERMAN.

If I deserve that title, I possess
 Honour more vast than monarchs can bestow.
 Ah loveliest of thy sex ! to see thee thus,
 To think my arm contributed to save
 Thy matchless beauties from impending fate,
 Is in itself a pleasure so extatic,
 I hardly dare to wish for more. And yet
 There is a boon I fain would crave—

IDA.

If't be

Within my pow'r, command it.

HERMAN.

Lady, do not
 Deem me too bold, if, when my soul is fill'd
 With ardour to deserve thy fair opinion,
 I crave thy leave thus, in the sight of heav'n,
 To dedicate myself to thy blest service :
 That, by thy pow'rful influence sustain'd,
 Success may crown my efforts, and return me
 More worthy of thy favour. When I'm gone—

IDA.

When thou art gone!—Ah! wherefore would'st thou go?

HERMAN.

To cast away the slough, that now defiles
 Whate'er of good is in me ; to become

Such as a man of honour ought to be.

IDA.

I understand you, sir ; I now perceive
That I conjectur'd rightly. Thou art not
What thy exterior shews, a peasant swain.

HERMAN.

I am not.

IDA.

What then, sir, is thy condition ?

HERMAN.

I'm for the present bound to secrecy.
A time may come—

IDA.

This is the only time—
Ere this to-morrow, faith, religion, duty
Will doom me never to behold thee more.

HERMAN.

What fatal myst'ry lurks beneath those words ?

IDA.

Another then will have a claim upon me—
A husband's claim—

HERMAN.

Support me, heav'nly pow'rs !
A husband, say'st thou ?—Oh recal that word !
Rack not my tortur'd heart !—By heav'n ! 'twere mercy
To die thus at thy feet, rather than live,

And see thee wedded to another !

IDA.

Rise—

This is no time in vain disguise to lose
The only moments I may call mine own.—
Thou'st said thou'rt not a peasant swain—

HERMAN.

I have.

IDA.

I do believe thee firmly. What thy rank,
And who thou art, thou'st cause not to reveal ?

HERMAN.

I'm bound to secrecy by a firm promise.

IDA.

Conjecture then is free. I've found thee noble,
And I will think thee all that I would have thee.
Know then, I'm menac'd with a fate more cruel
Than that from which thy valour rescued me.
To-morrow sees me wedded to a man
Whom my whole soul detests. Alone, defenceless,
My only guardian resolute to force
An union so repugnant to my feelings,
I brood o'er my distresses 'till distraction
To desperation points. Perhaps I wrong
My sex's honour and mine own, when thus,
Impell'd by dire necessity, I breathe

The secret of my heart; but thou'rt too noble
To abuse my confidence.

HERMAN.

All I can boast
Are honour and untainted faith.

IDA.

Ah! think not
Too lightly of me, if I pass beyond
The rigid bound of female delicacy.
Could'st thou but know what passes in this bosom,
Thy gallant nature would again incite thee
To save me from a fate—

HERMAN.

Tell me the means—
My soul, my ev'ry faculty, are thine.
Task me to all that nature can perform,
Bid me dare perils, rush on sure destruction,
I'll meet it all for thee!

IDA.

Thou hast sav'd my life—
But what is life condemn'd to endless anguish!
Pass but a few brief hours, and Ida's heart
Torn with conflicting agonies will break.
I see thou dost compassionate me—heav'n
Sent thee to succour me in my distress—
Oh save me now from mis'ry worse than death!

HERMAN.

There is but one way—but—

IDA.

Oh guess the rest !

In pity do not force me to say more !

HERMAN.

'Till now I never knew what mis'ry was.
Heav'n opens to my view—resplendent scenes
Of never ending joys my senses dazzle—
An angel bids me seize them as mine own—
But ah ! between a hideous gulph expands,
Forbidding all approach.—Oh Arnold ! Arnold !

IDA.

Whom call'st thou on ?

HERMAN.

I told thee of the promise
By which I'm firmly bound to secrecy.
To him 'tis giv'n. Should I prove false to him,
Can'st thou depend on me ? I pray thee grant me
A few short moments—let me fly to him,
Implore him to release me from the bond
That now enchains me—

IDA.

I'll not seek to tempt thee
To break those ties which honour has cemented.

Go, seek thy friend—then think of hapless Ida—
Think that to-morrow—

HERMAN.

Speak it not again—
For life or death I go—farewell—farewell!

[Exeunt severally.]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

*The Forest.**Enter Arnold.*

ARNOLD.

I CANNOT rest within my 'custom'd haunt.
A thousand agitating thoughts assail me,
And draw me forth to learn the fate of Herman
Now hast'ning to its crisis. Hapless youth!
Victim of guilt abhorrent from my soul—
A parent's guilt!—Oh Walstein, cruel father!
Why thus entail on me thy deadly hate,
Make me the wretched heir of thy revenge,
A vile accomplice in the degradation
Of this dear youth, whose brave and mounting spirit
Soars to that eminence from which thou drag'st him?
I can no longer act the shameful part
Thou didst enjoin me. Duty, honour, nature,
Assert their claim. I will obey their call,
Break through my trammels, and with Herman fly
These guilty shades for ever!—Who comes there?

••

Enter Herman.

HERMAN.

A wretch, whom even hope, the wretch's friend,
Abandons to despair. Bear with me, brother,
I need thy pitying succour to support me.
She's lost to me for ever !

ARNOLD.

Heav'n forefend !

HERMAN.

Yes, lost for ever. Think what agony
Seiz'd on my struggling heart, when, as she own'd
With blushing diffidence her pure affection,
She told me that to-morrow, aye, to-morrow
Will see her wedded to another.

ARNOLD.

How ?

HERMAN.

One whom her soul detests. Amid her tears
A smile of tenderness beam'd forth, as thus
With gen'rous confidence she spoke. Alas !
I could not smile ; my heart was torn with anguish ;
Dumb, trembling, lost to sense I stood before her :
Though happiness appear'd within my grasp,
I dar'd not seize it.

ARNOLD.

What prevented thee ?

•

HERMAN.

The conscious sense of my unworthiness.
Think'st thou I'm so abandon'd of all good,
So lost to ev'ry sentiment and feeling,
As thus to take advantage of her favour,
And make her unsuspecting purity
The partner of an outlaw'd bandit's fortunes?
Such foul deceit thy gen'rous soul would scorn.
Thank heav'n! mine scorn'd it too. My heart may break,
But never shall so base a treason stain it.

ARNOLD (*aside*).

Hill-fated youth! Nature will speak in thee,
And vindicate her work.—(*To him*) Be of good courage,
Though fortune now be adverse, she may grow
Hereafter more propitious. There are changes,
More than men look for, in the motley scene
Of our existence. Who can tell how soon
The cloud which now o'ershadows thee may vanish,
Leaving thy worth, like the meridian sun,
To dazzle with its brightness? Tell me, Herman,
Were such thy fate, wert thou her equal, would'st thou
Reject her proffer?

HERMAN.

Mock me not, I pray—
A wretch like me, who hardly may aspire
To gaze on her perfections—a poor outcast,

Bankrupt in fame and fortune—

ARNOLD.

There may be
More in fate's mystic volume, than thine eye
As yet can penetrate. In the deep mine
Lurks many a gem, which, polish'd, may adorn
A monarch's diadem.

HERMAN.

What dost thou mean ?

ARNOLD.

That which I dare not more distinctly speak.
But let this cheering thought compose thine anguish—
There is a pow'r, which watches over virtue,
And leads it in due time to happiness.

HERMAN.

Mine is, alas ! impossible !

ARNOLD.

Why so ?

If on thy worth alone her love be founded,
Thou may'st indeed be happy. I would try it,
And by a test which would not leave a doubt.
She knows thee now but as thou seem'st, a peasant,
Nor entertains suspicion to affect
Thy reputation. Tell me, have I thought
Too highly of thee, when I deem'd thy soul
Enqued with resolution to encounter

Whatever risk might wait on an adherence
To virtue's dictates? Dar'st thou undertake
A task revolting to thy gallant nature?

HERMAN.

Try me. Whatever duty prompts I dare.

ARNOLD.

Thou hast, observant of thy faith, abstain'd
From owning thy condition. Can'st thou now
Boldly avow to her the fatal truth?

HERMAN.

Confess mine infamy! Avow myself
Associate with banditti! Before heav'n!
It were an easier task at once to end
My life and misery, than thus proclaim
Mine own dishonour!

ARNOLD.

Pause awhile, and hear me.

Thine Ida plac'd her confidence in thee;
Wilt thou be less sincere tow'rds her?

HERMAN.

Thou ask'st

More than man's nature can achieve.

ARNOLD.

For shame!

Canst thou deceive her? No! thine heart will tell thee.
She has a claim to be appriz'd of all.

If her firm soul shall then remain unshaken,
 Invite her in some other clime to share
 Our future fortunes. If her pride of station
 Should make her scorn thee when thou'rt known, whate'er
 The pang that rends thy heart, conscious desert,
 The sense of inward rectitude and honour,
 Will prove a consolation which—

HERMAN.

Enough!

Ensue what may, I will adventure it.
 Farewell—detain me not—a word, a thought
 May warp me from my purpose. Life or death
 Are in suspense before me. When we meet,
 I'm lost for ever, or for ever blest!

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE II.

An Apartment in Stolberg Castle.

Enter Baron Stolberg and Count Rodolph.

BARON.

My lord, my lord, I pray no more of this.
 Still bick'ring and complaining!

RODOLPH.

What, my lord!
 On th' eve of marriage, to submit to treatment

So disrespectful and so indecorous !
The lady Ida is a handsome lady,
And, as your lordship's niece and only heir,
Entitled to respect ; yet, I must own,
Some little cultivation of her talents,
Some small initiation in the world,
Might have enhanc'd her nat'ral excellence.

BARON.

I beg your lordship's leave to differ from you.
From my small observation of the world,
I entertain some doubts how its example
Could make her wiser, modester, or better.

RODOLPH.

Your lordship misconceives me. Those are points
Quite unconnected with my observation.

BARON.

I'm sorry for't. I should have thought they were
The qualities a wise man would most seek for.

RODOLPH.

For a plebeian maxim that may do ;
But is your lordship yet to learn that we,
Who fill a more exalted sphere, require,
In those whom we select to share our rank,
Something more dignified, more graceful, more—

BARON.

Well, well, my lord, if that's your sentiment,

You've made in coming here a small mistake.
We are old-fashion'd people, and can't hope
To grow familiar with new-fangled notions.

RODOLPH.

My notions, give me leave to tell your lordship,
Are quite correct. There is a certain manner,
A kind of grace—

BARON.

Well, say no more about it—
There's no harm done—there may be families
More suited to your lordship's way of thinking
Than mine. The heiress of these rich domains
Need not despair of suitors. There are many,
As dignified as you, who'd gladly take her,
With all the imperfections you object to.

RODOLPH.

(*Aside*)—Plague on my petulance! I've gone too far:
Th' old gentleman must be appeas'd, or else
I lose all chance of his estate.—(*To the Baron*)—My lord,
I ask your lordship's pardon. On my honour,
You quite and clear mistake me. Lady Ida
Is a most dignified, accomplish'd lady,
The paragon of female excellence.

BARON.

Heyday! Why just this moment Ida was
A rude, uncultivated girl, and now

She is a paragon of excellence.

Your lordship's humble servant—you can veer,
I find, with ev'ry wind.

RODOLPH.

Who, I, my lord?

I crave permission to assure your lordship
You must undoubtedly have misconceiv'd me.
I entertain the most profound respect
For the young lady.

BARON.

Well, well—in that case,
What if your lordship should adopt a manner
A little better suited to her notions?
As you are like to pass your lives together,
'Twould be as well to set out on good terms.

RODOLPH.

My lord, I'm ready to do any thing
You may require.

BARON.

Then, in the first place,
Make up your silly quarrel, set things right,
And let me see you both with cheerful faces.
I'll go with you. I warrant me, you'll find her
As gentle as a lamb. These girls, my lord,
Think they've a privilege, while courtship lasts,

To have their way ; and it is fair they should,
For, poor things ! matrimony makes strange changes.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

An Apartment in Stolberg Castle.

Enter Agatha.

AGATHA.

Why lady Ida ! Bless us ! not here either ?
What's come of the dear child ? Why, lady Ida !

Enter Ida.

IDA.

Well, nurse, I'm here.

AGATHA.

There's such a do below,
Such moving and removing, such a bevy
Of carpenters and joiners, glaziers, painters,
All hard at work in making preparation
For the great feast to-morrow, that I vow
My poor head turns—do feel, dear, how I tremble—
I'm all in such a twitter—

IDA.

Well, sit down—
Compose yourself—so—Why did you call me ?

AGATHA.

Well, who'd have thought it sixteen years ago

It should have come to this? Saint Bridget save us!
You was not thus high when you first came here,
And now, heav'n bless the mark! you must be married.
To see how things turn out! I vow it seems
But yesterday, when my good lord sent for you,
To comfort him, poor man! for th' heavy loss
Of his young Albert. And I'm sure I thought
I should have died too.

IDA.

You must have felt much
For one you nurs'd.

AGATHA.

Aye marry—two whole years
I tended him. If he had been mine own
I had not lov'd him better. Lammas next
He'd have been twenty-one. He ran about,
And talk'd so prettily withal, and smil'd—
Poor little fellow! he so lov'd his nurse—

IDA.

Nay, do not weep—cheer up—come, tell me, nurse,
What did you want with me?

AGATHA.

With you? See there now—
I had clean forgotten. As I was returning
From goody Martin's cottage, where you sent me
To look at her sick child—it's getting better—

I met a young man just at the park corner,
A kind of peasant-looking lad, who stopt me,
And ask'd me to deliver you a letter—

IDA.

Dear Agatha, where is't? Come—give it me—

AGATHA.

Stay—don't be so impatient—Let me feel
In t'other pocket—Now Saint Bridget save me
If I ha'n't dropt it in my hurry.

IDA.

Dropt it?

AGATHA.

Where can it be?—Now if I hav'n't pok'd it
Here in my kerchief—

IDA.

Give it me, good nurse—

AGATHA.

Well, child, and am I to take back an answer?
I bad the bearer wait.—Well, take your time—
I have a thousand things to do.—Good bye! [*Exit.*]

IDA.—(*Reads*).

“ Absolv'd by him to whom my faith was given,
“ If Ida deign to hear me, I'm prepar'd
“ To state the whole of my disastrous story.”
Disastrous say'st thou? Hath calamity
Blighted so early thy fresh-budding hopes?

Alas ! Why should capricious fortune heap
 Her amplest gifts on such a thing as Rodolph,
 And leave thee destitute ? Ill-fated youth !
 I love thee more for knowing thou'rt unhappy !

[*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

A Bower in Stolberg Garden.

Enter Herman.

HERMAN.

Why lingers yet the sov'reign arbitress
 Of hapless Herman's fate ? Is't that, foreknowing
 The dreadful truths he is about to tell,
 Her tender nature shrinks from the rude trial,
 And bids her shun a wretch unworthy of her ?—
 Lo ! where she comes, all purity and truth.
 Now, now she sees me—what a heav'nly grace
 Beams o'er her lovely countenance !

Enter Ida.

IDA.

Thou tell'st me
 Thou art the victim of calamity.
 When I believ'd thee happy I esteem'd thee ;
 But when thou say'st that premature misfortune
 Hath weigh'd upon thee heavily, oh ! stay not
 To tell the fatal tale. Think me thy friend,

Point out the means by which I may relieve thee.

HERMAN.

Transcendent sweetness ! Thou art all perfection,
Pure as yon heav'n, to which we all aspire,
Though conscience tell us we're unworthy of it.
Ah ! fix not thus on me thy pitying glance ;
Thy tenderness unmans me : I have need
Of all my firmness, to complete the task,
Which stubborn duty has impos'd on me.
Let me implore thee, lady, to vouchsafe
A patient hearing to my luckless story.
I've that to tell thee—but alas ! how can I
Detail the horrors of my cruel fate,
Or be the herald of mine own disgrace !

IDA.

I will not credit thee. Thou art too noble
To merit the reproach thy words imply.

HERMAN.

Hear then, and, if thou can'st, disdain me not.
I am the victim of another's guilt ;
A father's crimes—I tremble to relate it—
Entail'd a curse on his devoted offspring:
Say, lady, hath perchance the name of Walstein
E'er met thine ear ?

IDA:

Walstein dost say ? Good heav'n !

He was my uncle's direst foe.

HERMAN.

That Walstein

Was Herman's father. To detail the cause
Which drove him, as an outcast from mankind,
To shun society, and to become
Its bitt'rest foe, would be an idle waste
Of the few precious moments thus allow'd me.
Suffice it then to say, within this forest
He found a refuge. There, in a lone cavern,
A troop of wild banditti held their station.
With them associate, soon superior talent
Made him their leader. Many a toilsome year
Witness'd his lawless reign, and when at length
His days were number'd, on my elder brother
Devolv'd his rude precedence. I meanwhile—

IDA.

Thou Herman—thou the inmate of a cavern!

HERMAN.

From earliest youth such was my destiny.
Yet often would a glancing ray of light
Beam on my soul, and fancied images
Of better recollections cross my mind,
Confus'd and indistinct, like the faint shadows
Of a gay dream, which haunt the wand'ring fancy
Of a poor wretch who wakes to certain woe.

Such certainty was mine. 'Till the blest hour
When I saw thee, no cheering hope appear'd
To pierce the gloom that thus envelop'd me.

IDA.

No more—thou hast already said too much—
Thou the associate of a felon crew!—
In pity oh unsay the dreadful story!

HERMAN.

I knew thou could'st not choose but hate me, lady ;
Yet canst thou not detest me more, than I
Detest myself. Though haply I may plead
The errors of my youth were not mine own.
They were mine only legacy deriv'd
From an unhappy father, once class'd high
Among Hungaria's peers. He brought me up
'Mid scenes of guilt ; but they could not efface
The principles which nature had implanted
In my young heart. Heav'n had bestow'd one gift,
One precious gift, to save me from perdition.
An elder brother—let me rather call him
My guardian angel—pitied and preserv'd me.
Virtuous himself, he taught me to love virtue.
With him am I about to quit these haunts,
And in some foreign clime, where yet our shame
Is not by rumour blazon'd, seek a fortune
More kindred to our birth and inborn feelings.

To-morrow's sun will witness our departure—

IDA.

Go then, and leave me to despair!—Or if
Thy purposes, brave youth, be those of virtue—
Nay, look not on me thus—I don't distrust thee—
I know, I feel they cannot but be virtuous—
Stay, and support me, Herman, 'gainst a fate,
Which now the knowledge of a worth like thine
Hath render'd insupportable.—Just heav'n!
Condemn me not, for yielding to an influence
I cannot combat.—If thou'st truth or feeling,
Let me implore thee not to leave me thus—
Save me, oh save me, Herman, from destruction!

HERMAN.

Oh rack not thus my bosom! Tempt me not
Beyond the bearing of a man!—I must not—
I dare not understand thee. Thou'rt too pure,
Too dignified, to share the hapless fortunes
Of a lost wretch like me.

IDA.

No, Herman, no—

Thy worth and innate nobleness exalt thee
To a proud eminence, whence with disdain
Thou may'st look down on rank and dignities,
Hence then each idle sentiment of pride!
My soul's above ye! Henceforth let me prove

I am thine equal, Herman, in those feelings
Which have engag'd my heart. Go where thou wilt,
Betide what may, I'll follow thee—become
The faithful sharer of thy humblest fortunes—
I'll aid thee—comfort thee—nay, beg for thee—

HERMAN.

Sure thou'rt some seraph wrapt in human form !

[Embracing her.]

Forgive me, lady—Herman for a moment
Forgot himself and thee.—Heav'ns ! dost thou weep ?
Oh spare me, spare me ! Ev'ry pearly drop
Which trickles from those eyes, each sigh which heaves
That bosom, raise a tempest in my soul,
Which mortal constancy cannot sustain.—
Have pity on me, heav'n ! I feel my weakness—
My heart proves traitor—But it may not be—
I cannot prove a villain, and undo thee.
Oh ! let me fly thee, while I yet have pow'r
To bear the conflict of contending passions.
If I look on thee, if I hear thy voice,
I am no more myself.—May angels guard thee ! *[Exit.]*

IDA.

Stay, Herman, stay !—he's gone !—Alas ! with him
My peace and happiness are flown together.
Thou leav'st me, Herman ! We may meet no more,
Never again that eye, that voice may cheer me :

But ever present to my suff'ring heart
Shall be the mem'ry of thy gallant nature.
Thus, in the presence of all-seeing heav'n,
To thee eternal constancy I vow.
Though climes may intervene, though trackless oceans
May roll between us, thy still cherish'd image
Shall follow me to solitude, and teach me
To consecrate my soul to thee and virtue! [Exit.

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in Stolberg Castle.

Enter Baron Stolberg and Agatha.

BARON.

COME, stir about, good Agatha, there's much
Yet to be done. We have no time to lose.
The ev'ning's far advanc'd, and I protest
The priest and all our noble company
Will arrive here to-morrow ere we're ready.

AGATHA.

I'm sure, Saint Bridget help me, I have toil'd
And hustled to and fro, up stairs and down,
And looking after ev'ry thing—Why Housdorff—
See there now, what's become of him?—If I
Am not the most unfortunate old woman
In Hungary!—Will no one hear?—Why Housdorff!

Enter Housdorff.

HOUSDORFF.

How now, good dame, what news is come to town,
That makes thee thus obstreperous?

AGATHA.

Good Housdorff,

Look to the furbishers in the great chamber,
See that the tap'stry hangings are brush'd up,
The carpets spread, and all the covers taken
From the best chairs and couches; and just peep
Into the banquet hall, see that the tables
Are all set out, and the chac'd family plate
Display'd upon the side-board—

HOUSDORFF.

All is done.

AGATHA.

Well, I must go incontinently to
The bridal chamber—

HOUSDORFF.

Fie, good Agatha,
Incontinently, say'st thou?

AGATHA.

Aye, gibe on—
I have no time to answer you.—See there now,
I almost had forgotten—Would your lordship
Have the new curtains fitted to the bed,
Or have the hangings from the oriel chamber
Remov'd?

BARON.

Oh! have the new ones by all means.

There—set about it—go along.

[*Exeunt Agatha and Housdorf.*]

Enter Ida.

What, Ida!

So late, my love? Not yet retir'd to rest?

Heyday! What means this sadness? Surely, love,
Thou hast been weeping.

IDA.

I have cause enough

To be distress'd, when thus you cast me from you,
Force me to leave my first, my best protector—

BARON.

Nay, be not such a simpleton—cheer up—
We were all busied here, in preparations
For thee, my love, and for to-morrow's business.
I am a foolish weak old fellow, child,
And, if I don't keep moving, I'm afraid
I hardly shall have courage to go through
My parting with thee. Thou hast been my pride,
My Ida, the sole darling of my heart,
My only hope since my poor boy was lost.
I'm growing old apace—when thou art gone,
No one will care for me—Nay, do not weep—

IDA.

Ah! do not make me quit you; suffer me

Still to attend upon you, still to watch
On your declining age, and minister
With dutiful affection to your wishes.
You love your Ida, uncle?

BARON.

—Love thee, child?

Aye, better than my life.

IDA.

Why then compel me

To leave you, when my services may most in time
Promote your happiness? Indeed, indeed, or what
It is not kind of you—

BARON.

Nay, now thou'rt foolish,

To talk to an old fellow in this way,
When a brisk bridegroom courts thee to his arms.

IDA.

D'you know, my good dear uncle, that I think you
Ten thousand times more pleasant and more charming
Than this fine gentleman, whose sole concern
Seems his own darling self?

BARON.

Why, to say truth,
He has a way with him, a disregard
For other people's sentiments and wishes—
But he means nothing by it—he'll turn out

An excellent good husband.

IDA.

Do, dear uncle,

Consent to let me still remain with you.

I'll be so good, and so obedient to you,

Take so much care of you—

BARON.

Go—thou'rt a coxer—

Thou'lt speak another sort of language soon.

The Count may seem perhaps a little cool,

Not quite so ready to pick up thy glove,

Or run on errands for thee, as some others;

But then thou must consider, my dear child,

He is a man of rank, a courtier, child,

Who has a name and station to keep up.

IDA.

With all my heart—he has my free permission

To be as proud and stupid as he pleases,

Provided I am not oblig'd to have him.

BARON.

Why how now, niece! Not have him?

IDA.

Don't be angry—

I do detest him mortally.

BARON.

So, so—

A pretty bus'ness we should make of it—
 Pray, madam; tell me, is not he a noble
 Of prime distinction, high in royal favour,
 And, what's still more important, is he not
 My choice?

IDA.

And my aversion! Dearest sir,
 Do pardon your poor Ida, but indeed,
 Sooner than marry him, I'd try to gain
 My livelihood by labour. 'Twere more honest,
 And ten times pleasanter—

BARON.

Heav'n grant me patience!
 Hark'ee, young madam—But I will be calm—
 Tell me—is this a trick to try my temper?

IDA.

Alas! I love you better than myself,
 But you will break my heart.

BARON.

No, never fear;
 Young women's hearts are not so quickly broken—

IDA.

I would do any thing to please you, sir,
 But—

BARON.

That's the way of all of you—"I'd do

"Any thing, sir, to please you, but—yes, truly,
That "but" comes opportunely in—But what?

IDA.

Would my death please you?

BARON.

No—thou know'st it wouldn't—

Thou know'st I love thee—

IDA.

I implore forgiveness—

I feel unwell—Let me retire, I pray.

BARON.

No, no, ma'am, that excuse sha'n't serve your turn—

[*Ida staggers to a chair.*

Why what's the matter with the child? You tremble,
And grow so pale—

IDA.

Indeed I'm very ill—

BARON.

Nay, thou art ill indeed—Why Agatha!

So, so, my love—Why Agatha, I say!—

Nobody come!

Enter Agatha.

See, see, good Agatha!

AGATHA.

Let me come to her—Now the saints be good—

Why, Ida!—What's to do here—give her air—

Untie her corset—so—raise her a little—
There—now she's better—

IDA.

Let me go, I pray,
To my own chamber.

BARON.

Aye, love, we'll conduct thee.
So, lean on me. Good Agatha, make haste,
And get things ready for her.—Now, my dear—
How could I have the heart to treat her thus!
A curs'd, ill-temper'd puppy!—Softly, love!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Interior of the Banditti's Cavern.

Enter Finck.

FINCK.

What ho! none stirring yet? Your wine was heady,
That thus you sleep it out.—What ho! I say—

Enter Swartz.

SWARTZ.

Plague on your brawling! Why we might as well
Live in a scurvy brotherhood of monks,
And be rung up at midnight to our pray'rs,

As thus be rous'd. I'll lay my life the night
Is not half spent.

FINCK.

I rais'd the trap e'en now—
The great bear stood over the dodder'd oak
That rises singly on the crag, and told me
'Twas three o'clock. 'Tis time we were abroad.
The day will dawn anon—we've an account
To settle with the world, for yesterday
Turn'd out a blank.—So—you are up at last.

Enter Gortz and other Banditti.

Where is our captain?

GORTZ.

Where I wish I was too—
Sound on his mattress yonder, I suppose.
Whate'er his other qualities may be,
I'll wager my next booty 'gainst a pumpkin,
There's not a man in Hungary shall match him
For a sound sleeper.

FINCK.

No reflections, Gortz—
Come—let us rouse him with a rumbling catch.

Trio by Finck, Swartz, and Gortz.

Night her darkling course has run,
And yields her empire to the sun;

Hooting owls their flight have made,
 And scud for shelter in the glade.
 There let them hide ; we sons of day
 Through the wide forest take our way,
 And, whereso'er is seen our band,
 Our watch-word still is stand, stand, stand.

FINCK.

Well said, i'faith ! If this don't bring him out,
 The fam'd seven sleepers were mere boys to him.

Enter Arnold.

ARNOLD.

What, all alert ? This augurs ill, methinks,
 For those who travel early 'cross our haunts.
 How wears the time ?

FINCK.

'Tis about three, I take it.

ARNOLD.

Know ye if Baron Stolberg hunt to-day ?

FINCK.

And if he do, what's that to us ?

ARNOLD.

Why this.

His sport of yesterday, you know, marr'd yours.
 If he again should take the field, your trouble
 Will prove of small avail.

SWARTZ.

That's true enough.

But how to ascertain if he go forth?

ARNOLD.

Leave that to me. I'll venture out alone,
 And bring you information. You, meanwhile,
 Adjourn to th' refectory, and recruit
 Your spirits with a cup of gen'rous wine,
 What say ye, comrades?

FINCK.

That the motion's good;
 And, if the liquor prove not worse, you'll find us,
 When you return, well prim'd for action.—Come—
 Lets drink to our commander's good success. [*Exeunt.*

ARNOLD.

They're well dispos'd of for an hour or two.
 And now to meet my Herman in the forest.

[*Exit through the trap-door.*]

SCENE III.

*The Forest.**The Dawn just breaking.**Enter Herman.*

HERMAN.

The morning dawns; and renovated nature
 Awakens to receive the sun's glad beams

That summon her to life and new exertion.
 Creation smiles around me; in each glade
 The gay birds carol; every flow'et lifts
 Its gaudy head, and scatters round its fragrance.
 All, all but me the gen'ral transport share:
 Me the light cheers not—yonder glowing east
 Is but the harbinger of woe to me,
 Denouncing horror and despair.

Enter Arnold.

ARNOLD.

Who thus
 Talks of despair? Thou, Herman?

HERMAN.

Oh my brother!

ARNOLD.

I look'd to meet thee full of hope and joy.
 Hath any ill betided?

HERMAN.

I am wretched—
 My heart is almost broken—I've fulfill'd
 My promise—I have told her all—

ARNOLD.

Is then her love fleeting as yonder clouds
 That skim o'er heav'n's expanse?

HERMAN.

Oh! wrong her not—

Her love, her faith are spotless as herself ;
But I am ruin'd, lost to ev'ry hope—

ARNOLD.

This surely is extravagance. Thou'st prov'd her,
As thou can'st wish, affectionate and constant.
Why then talk idly thus of being wretched ?

HERMAN.

That very proof thou speak'st of has undone me.
Had I not learnt the value of the prize
At which I aim'd, I had not felt the anguish
Which harrows up my soul. Oh, my best brother !
Had'st thou but seen how nobly she sustain'd
The fatal truths I utter'd, thou'st have lov'd her ;
Nay, thou'st have worshipp'd her, had'st thou but seen her
When I discours'd to her of thee, my Arnold,
And of thy virtues. From her eyes dropt tears
Of gen'rous sympathy, her bosom throbb'd,
She could not speak—but when at length I told her
Of our resolve to quit these guilty shades,
And seek renown in some far distant clime,
Her tears no longer flow'd ; transport illum'd
Her glowing cheeks ; with more than human firmness
She bad me save her from a rival's arms ;
She vow'd to follow, nay to beg for me.

ARNOLD.

Could'st thou resist her proffer ?

HERMAN.

Could I live

Weigh'd down by consciousness of foul dishonour?

Heav'n knows my heart; I love her far too well

To be the author of her wretchedness—

Reduce her to an outlaw'd bandit's fortunes?—

No, no—thank heav'n! that fate I have escap'd.

ARNOLD. (*aside*).

Passion so works on his too feeling nature,

He must not thus be left.—Can'st thou trust me?

HERMAN. (*gripping Arnold's hand*)

I can.

ARNOLD. (*catching Herman's hand*)

Then thus I'll put thee to the proof.

That ring from thy lov'd Ida's hand receiv'd—

Intrust it to me.

HERMAN. (*hesitating*)

Ha! the ring dost say?

Ask any thing but that—

ARNOLD. (*pressing Herman's hand*)

And canst thou doubt me?

HERMAN.

I doubt thee not—I'd trust thee with my life—

But there's a sacred int'rest in that ring—

I vow'd to keep it—

ARNOLD.

I've a work in hand
Which will not brook delay—thine own, thine Ida's
Redemption from the ills which menace you.
Without that ring I can do nothing—

HERMAN.

Take it—
'Tis the sole treasure I possess on earth.

ARNOLD.

Fear not—'tis safe with me.—Farewell—I go
To serve thee and thy love—Enquire not where—
Trust to my zeal and friendship. In that grove
Wait my return. Ere the fresh risen sun
Shall gild yon mountain, I'll be back with thee.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE IV.

An Apartment with a glass Door opening into a Garden.

*On one side, Ida reposing on a Couch. A lighted
Lamp on a Table.*

Baron Stolberg, Count Rodolph, Ditmar, and Agatha.

BARON.

I am extremely mortified, my lord,
At this untoward accident.

RODOLPH.

Why truly

It rather is *mal-à-propos*.—(To Ditmar) Pray, sir,
As you're physician to the household here,
Allow me to demand your way of thinking.

DITMAR.

I have no very particular way, my lord :
My way of thinking is, as I conjecture,
Like that of other men.

RODOLPH.

Sir, that's no answer.

I have a right to know the manner, sir,
In which you think.

DITMAR.

Really that's rather odd—

But, if you must know how I set about it,
I've not the least objection to inform you.
Whenever I've a knotty point in hand
That calls for serious deliberation,
I gen'rally sit down, and, pouring out
A glass of ale, I light my pipe—

RODOLPH.

Sir, you're

Impertinent—

BARON.

What moves your lordship thus?

What is the matter, doctor?

DITMAR.

I protest

I know not—I intended no offence.

RODOLPH.

No, sir?—Did you not tell me, when I ask'd
Your way of thinking 'bout the lady's illness—

DITMAR.

About the lady's illness? Hoh! that's quite
A diff'rent thing. I comprehend you now.
My way of thinking is, her nervous system—
That is, her nerves seem to be what we call
Shatter'd—derang'd—and shaken all to pieces.—
Ahem! She must have sedatives—narcotics—
Something to tranquillize—You comprehend me?

BARON.

Perfectly, doctor. If I take you right,
In the first instance you would recommend
Your patient to be kept extremely quiet.

DITMAR.

Nothing on earth is better.

BARON.

Then, my lord,
Suppose we leave her for a while. Hey, doctor?
Will you attend our consultation?
You shall have all your implements for thinking.

care of the dear child, good Agatha.

[*Exeunt the Baron, Rodolph, and Dittmar.*]

AGATHA.

urry, and if Saint Bridget please, I will
it me down awhile. 'Tis a raw morning,
likely to breed rheums.

(*Covers her head with a kerchief.*)

There, now my head
ing and comfortable.—Bless the child!
quietly she dozes.—I'll e'en take
the nap myself—

IDA.

Agatha!

AGATHA.

Well—

oming—what dost want, dear?

IDA.

I feel better,

Agatha, I think.

AGATHA.

The saints be prais'd!

IDA.

, Agatha, I wish you'd leave me now,
go to rest yourself.

AGATHA.

Leave you alone!

IDA.

I should be better for it. I can't sleep.
While you are sitting here. I pray you go.

AGATHA.

Well, dear, I will. I hope to find you better.

[Agatha closes the curtains of the couch and goes out.]

IDA.—(Rising).

This is indeed beyond the warmest hope
I dar'd to form. One day, one blest day more
At least is granted me, without a crime,
To dedicate my thoughts to gen'rous Herman.
Yet what relief can a short day afford,
When ev'ry hope is blasted, and futurity
Brings with it nought but lasting wretchedness?
Oh! that protecting Providence would snatch me
From ills which human aid cannot ward off,
Would send some guardian spirit charg'd with mercy—
Who's that?—Defend me heav'n!—A stranger!—Sir,

Enter Arnold.

I know not by what priv'lege you presume
To trespass on my privacy—

ARNOLD,

By none.

My boldness, lady, would preclude forgiveness,
Had I not such a reason to allege,

As may atone for my presumption.

Behold my passport, lady.

IDA.

How! The ring

I gave to Herman?

ARNOLD.

To my brother, lady.

IDA.

Your brother, sir?

ARNOLD.

I'm that unhappy Arnold,
Whose humble efforts train'd his gen'rous soul
To trace the path that leads to virtuous fame.
I was prepar'd with him to quit the scene,
Where cruel fate had doom'd us to become
Associates with the refuse of mankind,
In other climes to achieve the fair renown,
That heritage of our once pure descent,
Now stain'd, polluted—but no more of that—
Our visionary prospects now are clouded—

IDA.

Speak, sir, I pray you say what has occur'd—

ARNOLD.

I have left Herman—

IDA.

What of him? No evil

Hath sure betided him—

ARNOLD.

None, but such as

You have the pow'r to remedy. He loves you
With all the ardour of a gallant spirit,
Which can appreciate all your excellence,
But which not all that excellence itself,
Nor all the whirlwind of contending passions,
Can force beyond the sacred bound of honour
To build his happiness upon your ruin.

IDA.

I felt, and do full justice to his motives.
He might have sav'd me from—

ARNOLD.

He will—he must—

The hour ordain'd by fate to exalt you both
To the pure bliss you merit is arriv'd,
And now, by me its minister, invites you
To seize the favouring opportunity.
You are a noble lady—I have heard
What pass'd betwixt you—there is not a secret
Of Herman's soul that's not reveal'd to me—
His ev'ry thought, his ev'ry wish are thine—
You rule his destiny—

IDA.

Pity me, sir!

I am indeed most wretched and abandon'd—
 Torn by conflicting passions!—Herman's lost—
 Another, ah how diff'rent! claims my hand—
 This day, this fatal day, unites me to him—
 I have no friend to counsel or assist me—

ARNOLD.

If one like me, unknown to you by aught
 But Herman's fair report, may claim that title,
 I hold my life as nought, so I may save
 From ev'ry ill the mistress of his soul.
 Say, lady, are your sentiments unchang'd,
 Will you still fly these nuptials, and partake
 The fate of him who loves you for yourself?

IDA.

Heav'n knows my heart I would!

ARNOLD.

Then fly with me

To save him from despair—Dread not th' event,
 When virtue and affection are your guides,
 And Providence the guardian of your way.
 Nay, be of good cheer, lady—there's a secret,
 Which now envelopes Herman's destiny,
 That time must soon disclose. Then shalt thou find him
 Not less in rank and station worthy of thee,
 Than now in innate nobleness.—Believe me—
 I pledge my life on't thou wilt find him so.

IDA.

I cannot doubt thee.—Give me a short moment—
I would reflect—

ARNOLD.

Reflection's now too late—
Time presses—your attendants will return—
They will discover me—The hour's at hand
When legal violence will drag you hence
To pledge the hateful vows—Think on poor Herman,
Whose heart is torn with agony—

IDA.

No more—

I will believe that heav'n hath heard my pray'r,
And in compassion sent thee here to save me.
Sir, in the name of him you love, of Herman,
I trust myself to you and to your honour.

ARNOLD.

May heav'n no more regard me when I fail you !
Now, lady, on—to Herman and to love !

[Exeunt.]

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

*Ida's Apartment.**Enter Agatha.*

AGATHA.

So—all quite quiet, and the curtains drawn.
 How still the dear child is—Now bless her soul,
 I've a good mind to take a little peep
 Just to look at her—(*Opens the curtains*)—Ah! where is
 the child?
 Why Ida!—What's become of her?—Why Ida!—
 Oh that I ne'er had liv'd to see this day!—
 Housdorff!—I tremble so—Why Gregory!
 Peter!—Where are you all?

Enter the Baron, the Count, Ditmar and Servants.

BARON.

What's here to do?

AGATHA.

She's gone!

BARON.

Who's gone?

AGATHA.

Oh my poor child!

BARON.

What! Ida!

Death and destruction!—Peter! Gregory!

What are you doing here? Search ev'ry where—

[*Exeunt Agatha and Servants.*

I'll go myself. (*To Rodolph*)—My lord, why don't you stir?

RODOLPH.

I can't imagine why your lordship takes
All this unnecessary trouble.

BARON.

Trouble!

No trouble at all, sir; and you might as well
Exert yourself, I think.

RODOLPH.

I hate exertions.

I'm always very cool on these occasions.

BARON.

Aye, so it seems indeed.

RODOLPH.

Twenty to one,

Your lordship labours under a mistake.

BARON.

Was ever such—Why is not the girl gone?

RODOLPH.

And what's so very wonderful in that?
If, after all, it should turn out the lady,
Finding herself refresh'd, has merely taken
A turn i' th' garden—

DITMAR.

Nothing is more likely
To do her good, and tranquillize her spirits.

BARON.

Taking a walk, d'you say? If I thought that—

DITMAR.

The very thing that I should recommend
For one in her condition.

BARON.

You don't say so?
Nay, if it be no more than that—But really
I must confess I was alarm'd at first.

Enter Agatha and Servants.

Well, Agatha, what news?

AGATHA.

Oh it's all over—
She is elop'd—gone off—

BARON.

Gone off!—With whom?

AGATHA.

Nay, an I know—But gone she is for certain.
There stands the door, at t'other end o' th' garden,
Next to the wood, wide open, with the lock
Wrench'd off—

BARON.

Now, pray sir, how am I mistaken?

RODOLPH.

The circumstances really seem suspicious.

BARON.

They do!

Enter Housdorff.

HOUSDORFF.

My lord, you must bestir yourself.
The lady Ida—

BARON.

Well—

HOUSDORFF.

I was preparing
To look for some game in the nether copse,
When, on a sudden, from the garden gate
I saw her sally forth, accompanied
By a young man.

BARON.

Confusion! A young man?
Why how—who was he?—What did he look like?

HOUSDORFF.

I was too far off to distinguish him,
And, ere I could get round to follow them,
They'd struck into the thickest part o'th' forest.

BARON.

Set off! Pursue them!—Housdorff! call all hands—
Swords, pistols, carbines!

[*Excunt Housdorff, Agatha, and Servants.*]

Now, my lord, perhaps,
You'll condescend t'exert yourself.

RODOLPH.

My lord,
I'll do myself the honour to attend you. [*Excunt.*]

SCENE II.

The Forest.

Enter Arnold and Ida.

ARNOLD.

Keep up your spirits, madam, we have nearly
Got to a place of safety. But I fear
You'll be fatigued.

IDA.

Oft when the pipe and tabor

Have echo'd through the hall, I've led the train
 Of merry dancers twice as far, nor ever
 Felt weary or exhausted. It were hard
 If I fail'd now, when ev'ry thing depends
 On my exertion. Come, sir, I am ready.
 Let us go on.

ARNOLD.

There, through yon op'ning glade
 Must we pursue our course.—But hark! What's that?
 Heard you not, madam?

IDA.

But too plainly. 'Tis
 The sound of voices. Now it louder grows.
 I fear they have discover'd my departure,
 And are in close pursuit of us.

ARNOLD.

'Tis so.

We have no time to lose. Come on—this way.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

Another Part of the Forest.

Enter Herman.

HERMAN.

Why stay'st thou, Arnold? Why prevent me thus
 From ranging freely through this wilderness

With its free denizens, the fit associates
Of a lost wretch like me? I'm not less savage,
Less outcast from society than they—

ARNOLD (*from behind*).

Now have we reach'd the spot.

HERMAN.

'Tis Arnold's voice—

ARNOLD.

Where art thou, Herman!

HERMAN.

Here!

Enter Arnold and Ida.

Immortal pow'rs!

Do I behold thee, Ida?

ARNOLD.

We're pursued—

Here, take my weapon—see thou guard'st her well.

I must haste on, to summon further aid. [*Exit.*]

HERMAN.

Let who will come, I'll guard thee with my life.

IDA.

I fear not for myself. They will respect me.

But as for thee—

HERMAN.

Let's hasten quickly on—

This way—

IDA.

Impossible—dost thou not hear?

HERMAN.

We're circled in on ev'ry hand—I pray thee
Stand there aloof, and leave me here to face them.

IDA.

Abandon thee? No, never!

Enter Housdorff and Servants.

HOUSDORFF.

Here they are!

Seize him! Lay hold of him!

HERMAN.

Hear me—one word—

HOUSDORFF.

No words—Fall on—

IDA.

Forbear, I charge thee, Housdorff—

Hear me at least—

HOUSDORFF.

There will be time anon :

Our business is with that gentleman.

Give up thy sword, and yield thyself our pris'ner,
Or take the consequences of thy rashness.

HERMAN.

Were instant death the consequence, I would not

Purchase inglorious life on such condition.

Come on—I dare you all—

HOUSDORFF.

Now, lads—that's right—

[*They fight—Herman is taken.*]

Beshrew me, but thou did'st it well, young man,
'Twas no boy's play to master thee. You, Peter,
And you, secure him well, see he escape not;
And do you, Gregory, hasten to the castle
With news of our success. It will be worth
A new suit to thee.—Come, my pretty lady,
You are my special charge.—Bring him along!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

Outside of the Banditti's Cavern.

Enter Arnold, hastily.

ARNOLD.

At length I've reach'd the cavern—(*sounds his bugle*)
Haste! ascend!—(*The trap-door opens.*)

Enter Banditti.

Is there among you one, who at the call
Of honour will hold back when danger presses?

FINCH.

Try us.

ARNOLD.

When a brave comrade is in danger,
Will you desert him?

SWARTZ.

Put us to the proof.

ARNOLD.

You answer heartily. Now hear me, friends.
My brother, Herman, yonder is beset
By a whole host of foes—There is no mercy
For him t'expect, unless we succour him.

FINCK.

Where is he?

ARNOLD.

In the grove of pines that skirts
The road to Stolberg Castle. He has with him
A treasure—

SWARTZ.

Marry, then we go for something.

ARNOLD.

Aye, such a treasure, Swartz, as kings might envy—
The Baron's lovely heiress.

SWARTZ.

How the plague
Shall we gain ought by that?

ARNOLD.

Why thus, good Swartz—

If we can rescue them from their pursuers,
We shall obtain a pledge, which, at what price
We please to fix, the Baron must redeem.

FINCK.

What think ye, lads?—Our captain speaks most sagely :
A prize like that makes us all gentlemen.
I'll on for one—

BANDITTI.

Aye, one and all—

FINCK.

Lead on.

ARNOLD.

Thanks, my good friends—now forward to his succour !

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

The great Hall in the Castle.

Enter Housdorff and Servants.

HOUSDORFF.

Set ev'ry thing in order—so, you're all
Got here to see the trial I perceive.

SERVANT.

There's neither big nor little, man nor boy,
Who has not hurried from his post, to have
A peep at what goes forward. By the mass,

The walls and gates may take care of themselves,
 For not a porter nor a centinel
 Is left to guard them.

HOUSDORFF.

Silence! Here's the Baron.
 Away, away! Be sure to be in readiness,
 When order's given, to attend the pris'ner.

[*Exeunt Housdorff and Servants.*]

Enter Baron Stolberg and Count Rodolph.

BARON.

Be pleas'd to take a chair, my lord; we'll probe
 This strange mysterious business to the core.—(*They sit.*)
 Your lordship must be sensible I feel,
 And pretty strongly too, on this occasion;
 But I still trust you'll put a fair construction
 Upon my niece's conduct. I'm convinc'd
 You'll find no censure can attach on her.

RODOLPH.

I'm an indiff'rent judge of these affairs.
 The lady Ida may, for aught I know,
 Have infinite desert; but certainly
 Her manners do appear rather eccentric
 To us who've liv'd in courts, and, in her style
 Of conversation, sentiments, and conduct,
 There's an agreeable rusticity,

A kind of *je ne sçai quoi* so captivating—

BARON (*rising*).

My lord, I understand you ; but such sarcasms,
You'll give me leave to tell you, are mistim'd.

RODOLPH.

Not in the least. The thing is quite apparent.

BARON.

Is't so indeed ? Well, well, I know you now.

RODOLPH.

I am rejoic'd you do. I should be glad
To hear what great discov'ry you have made.

BARON.

I'll speak more truly of you than your glass does.
You think yourself a most accomplish'd person,
And in your own sphere, in the drawing room,
Among the vain and gilded insects, who
Spread their gay plumes, buzz their unmeaning nothings,
And flutter in the sunshine of court favour,
You may be a distinguish'd personage—

RODOLPH.

That's true—Go on.

BARON.

So much for what you are.
And now for what you are not. You shall never
Marry my niece, sir.

RODOLPH.

There you're wrong again.

BARON.

No, sir, I'm right, and you shall find it so.
I'd have you know my Ida is a girl
Train'd under my own eye—

RODOLPH.

So I should judge
From her improvement.

BARON.

Should you so? Well, well—
We'll settle that affair anon, sir—Housdorff!—
When we have finish'd what we have in hand—
Bring in the pris'ner—You shall find, my lord,
These taunts will not succeed at Stolberg castle.

Enter Herman, Housdorff, Agatha, and Servants.

So—stand aside there—let me look at him.—
A youth—and of an aspect fair and modest—
I should not guess him one mature in guilt,
A midnight ravisher—Mark me, young man—
Thou stand'st before me, charg'd with having forc'd
Thine entrance here, and having borne away
The lady Ida.

HERMAN.

'Twere a weighty charge,

If proof could reach it. Who is't dares accuse me?

RODOLPH.

Dar'st thou deny it? Thou'rt a special fellow
To ask the question, when thou'rt apprehended
In the direct commission of the crime.

BARON.

Pray, who requested you to interfere?

RODOLPH.

To interfere?

BARON (*to Herman*).

It matters not, young man,
Who made the charge. What answer hast thou to it?

HERMAN.

Grant that the charge were founded, let me ask
How my conviction of it would affect
The lady or myself?

BARON.

No doubt would rest
On her fair fame; thy portion would be death.

HERMAN (*aside*).

To die—with infamy to quit a world,
In which I leave behind me no memorial
Of one good deed to qualify my shame!
'Tis dreadful! But, by dying, to preserve
Ida's fair fame, to vindicate her honour,
With my last breath to champion her renown—

By heav'n! existence has no charms compar'd
With such a death!—My lord, I own the charge.

BARON.

You own it to be true then?

HERMAN.

I have said.

BARON.

How dar'dst thou thus, a youth whose cheek as yet
Scarcely gives signal of well ripen'd manhood,
Provoke my vengeance by a deed so hardy,
That practis'd villainy would start at it?
Tell me—Who art thou? Where is thine abode?

HERMAN.

I stand before thee, to abide the sentence
Which justice may inflict on my offence.
Whate'er it may be, I have made full atonement.
The lady Ida's fame is clear'd; no tongue
Can dare impeach her purity and honour.
Take then my forfeit life, and let the wretch,
Who with his blood confirms her innocence,
Unquestion'd drop into his silent tomb,
Where he and all his miseries may sleep
In deep forgetfulness.

BARON.

Hath mis'ry then
Been the companion of thine early years?

HERMAN.

The past I wish not to recal. What boots it
 To talk of one, who soon must cease to be,
 And whose inglorious life no splendid deed
 From merited oblivion has redeem'd ?
 I pray thee, let me die as I have liv'd,
 Unnotic'd and unknown ; and, since for death
 Thy sentence goes, this only I implore,
 Let not delay enhance its bitterness.

RODOLPH.

That seems a very reasonable request.
 The sooner you comply with it the better.

BARON.

Is this a time for ribbald jesting, sir ?
 Cannot the gallant firmness of this youth
 Move thee to pity ? There is that about him
 Which strangely touches me, and makes me loth
 To pass the sentence of his death.

Enter Ida.

IDA.

His death !

What has he done to merit such a fate ?

RODOLPH.

Surely your ladyship can't ask that question.
 A fellow who feloniously stole you
 When we had left you fast asleep—

IDA.

'Tis false—

He's innocent—I'll swear he is—

BARON.

Nay, nay,

Hasn't he pleaded guilty? His confession

Has clear'd thy reputation.

IDA (*aside*).

Gen'rous youth!

Hast thou then sacrific'd thyself for me?

(To the Baron).—Sir, let me thus, in presence of that
heav'n

Which knows my truth, absolve him from offence.

He enter'd not my chamber, he was not

Companion of my flight.

BARON.

Were ye not found

Together in the forest?

IDA.

I confess it;

But he was not the man who led me thither.

RODOLPH.

So, then another was concern'd. Come, madam,

Pray let us hear the fortunate man's name.

IDA.

Peace, wretch! thou'rt ev'ry way below my scorn.

(*To the Baron*).—My lord, to you I make appeal. When
did I

Speak other than the truth?

BARON.

Thou never did'st.

IDA.

Then, on my soul, that youth is innocent.

BARON.

Tell me then, Ida, on thy truth I charge thee,
Who was th' audacious man who bore thee off?

IDA.

To that I cannot answer.

BARON.

No! Why not?

I'll know it ere we part.—(*To Herman*)—Speak thou—
Declare

Who thy accomplice was?—(*A noise without*)—Ha! What
means this?

Enter Arnold hastily.

ARNOLD.

Herman in bonds! Arraign'd too for his life!
Forbear, rash man, thou know'st not what thou dost.
I charge thee, by thy hopes of happiness
Now and hereafter, to respect his life.
Look on him—doth not ev'ry nerve, each drop

Of blood that circulates within thee, thrill
 When thou regard'st him?—Take him to thine heart—
 He is thy son, thy long-lost Albert—

IDA.

Heav'ns!

His son!—(*To the Baron*)—Oh! can you stand unmov'd
 and hear

That name, so dear, so oft lamented by you?

BARON.

Say, who art thou, who confidently thus
 Call'st him my son?

ARNOLD.

My name is Arnold.

BARON.

Whence

Com'st thou, and what thy station?

ARNOLD.

From the forest,

Where a bold troop of bandits call me leader.

RODOLPH.

A proper witness! Seize on him!

ARNOLD.

Beware!

Thou'dst better take a lion by the beard,
 Than lay a hand on me. [*Sounds his bugle.*]

RODOLPH.

Zounds, what a peal !

Enough to burst one's brain.

Enter Banditti.

FINCK.

Here, noble captain ;

What is thy pleasure ? Shall we seize them all ?

Here's one I make my pris'ner. He appears

As if he'd ransom handsomely— [Seizes the Count.

RODOLPH.

Keep off !

Lay not thy beastly paws upon me, fellow !

FINCK.

Beastly ! I scorn the word.—Say it again—

ARNOLD.

No more—Release him—Keep a guard without ;

I'll give the signal, if I want your aid.

[*Exeunt Banditti.*

You see I came prepar'd. My lord, your castle

'Is in our hands, and you are in our pow'r

Fear not we shall abuse it. But, my lord,

Since you refuse me credit, you shall have

A stronger witness. Did you know Count Walstein ?

BARON.

What right hast thou to ask ?

ARNOLD.

That of his son.

BARON.

Of Walstein—of the man whose vengeful hate
Had wrought my fall, had not his plans recoil'd
On his own head, and driv'n him with disgrace
To pass in some obscure recess that life
His crimes had justly forfeited?

ARNOLD.

Of him,

Of Walstein, whom you character too truly,
Behold th' unhappy son. From Presburg driv'n,
Here, in the neighb'ring forest, he took refuge,
His anguish heighten'd to despair, his soul
Fost'ring revenge against mankind and thee.
Soon a congenial troop of wild banditti
Obey'd him as their chief; but incomplete
Remain'd the vengeance he had vow'd 'gainst thee,
'Till from his slumb'ring nurse he stole thy son.

BARON.

I know not what to think—Too well I knew
He was my mortal foe—But thou, thou had'st
No cause to hate me. If thou knew'st the secret,
How could'st thou trifle with a father's pangs,
And doom me thus to years of hopeless anguish?

ARNOLD.

I was prepar'd, my lord, to meet your censure.
Now grant me patience, while I state the cause
That led me thus, against my better nature,
Not to divulge it. On the couch of death
My father first disclos'd to me the secret
Of Herman's birth. His trembling hand was lock'd
In mine, as thus he solemnly address'd me.
"As thou would'st 'scape a dying father's curse,
"Swear that to Stolberg thou wilt ne'er reveal
"Th' existence of his son; so shall my hate
"Survive me, so shall my revenge be full."
I shudder'd as he spoke, but I obey'd him.
Too long my guilty vow have I fulfil'd;
But now the hand of heav'n itself impels me
To shield him from destruction, and save thee
From the commission of a crime, from which
Nature recoils.

BARON.

I know not how to doubt thee.

RODOLPH.

I'd have your lordship be upon your guard.
The whole may be a history trumpt up
Between these fellows, to impose on you.
I would require some further evidence.

BARON.

Hear'st thou, sir, what he says? In such a case,
Some proof, some token of identity
May doubtless be produc'd—

AGATHA.

Oh the good saints!
The truth I see will out. The poor dear baby—
It breaks my heart to think on't—was stol'n from me,
When I had left it playing in the grove;
And as, in the first moment of my fright,
I laid his loss to some wild rav'ning beast,
I ne'er had courage to confess the truth.
By the same token, on his wrist he bore
A bloody arrow's mark.

HERMAN (*baring his arm*).

Behold it here.

BARON.

Come to my arms! Thou art indeed my son!

HERMAN.

Thus on my knees let me receive thy blessing!

BARON.

Thou hast it.—Quick! release him from these bonds—
Oh Ida! My lov'd child!

IDA.

My heart o'erflows

With joy and transport ; heav'n has heard my pray'r,
And my whole soul expands with gratitude.

BARON.

My Albert ! How can I repay thy suff'rings ?

HERMAN.

Life has for me but one attractive treasure.
A father will not chide his new-found son,
If, at the moment when his heart beats high
With exultation, he avow his love
For her, who deign'd to grace with her pure favour
An unknown, abject outcast—

BARON.

Hear'st thou, Ida ?

What shall I say for thee ? Answer him, girl.
Whate'er thou say'st I'll ratify—

RODOLPH.

My lord,

This is such singular behaviour—

BARON.

Can't you be quiet ?

RODOLPH.

To a man like me—

BARON.

Let her go on, sir ; you shall have your turn,
I warrant me.—Come, dearest, speak.

IDA.

From him,

Whom, from the moment when returning sense
Reveal'd him as my brave deliverer,
I felt entitled to the best return
My heart could offer, can I now withhold
The hand which thus his modest suit solicits?
(*To Herman*) Take it, the sacred pledge of Ida's love.

RODOLPH.

Madam, I vow—My lord—This is beyond
All bearing—in my presence to proclaim
Affection for a bandit—Madam, madam—

HERMAN.

Keep off! and learn to govern thy discourse.

RODOLPH.

Thou talk to me, sir?

HERMAN.

Aye, my lord to thee.

Nay, frown not, nor look big. If thou presum'st
To speak one disrespectful syllable
To yonder lady, not this noble presence
Shall skreen thee from my vengeance.

BARON.

There it is now—

I said my niece would never be thy bride.

Matters are alter'd, Count; I've found a son,
Who now must be sole heir of my possessions.
That makes a little difference.

RODOLPH.

An immense one.

This is a very pleasant incident; (*forcing a laugh*)
Upon my honour it diverts me vastly.
You've pick'd up some acquaintances, who doubtless
Will do great credit to your family party.

I wish you heartily joy of each other,
And am, with sentiments of due respect,
The company's obedient humble servant. [*Exit.*]

BARON.

Well, get thee gone—thou art not worth recalling.
Sir Arnold—let me rather call thee Walstein—
Count Walstein—look upon this roof as thine.
As for your followers—

ARNOLD.

From this hour, no more
Hold I connection with them; but I crave,
Whate'er be their offences, they may have
Free pardon for them. I am bound in honour
Not to abandon those, whom confidence
In my good faith induc'd to follow me.

BARON.

Their pardon is secur'd. If they shall quit

Their savage habits, and become good subjects,
They shall find favour from me.—Come, my son,
Come, Ida, dearer to my heart than ever !
My cares are over, all my future days
I dedicate to happiness and you !

[*Exeunt Omnes.*

THE END.

TRICKS UPON TRAVELLERS.

A COMEDY.

Nebuloni opponetur sesqui-nebulo.

IGNORAMUS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DON GUZMAN DE PACHECO, A Nobleman of Seville.
DON CARLOS DE GUZMAN, A Nobleman of Madrid.
DON RAMIREZ DE FONSECA, A Toledan Gentleman.
DON ALONZO,A Gentleman of Seville.
CUCHILLO,A Lawyer.
PEDRILLO,Servant to Don Carlos.
DIEGO,Servant to Don Ramirez.
BALTHAZAR,Servant to Don Guzman.
BERTRAN,Steward to Donna Clara.
DONNA CLARA DE MENDOZA, A Lady from Elvas.
DONNA LAURA Daughter of Don Guzman.
BEATRICE,Waiting-maid to Donna
HOSTESS. Clara.

Servants, &c.

Scene—Seville.

TRICKS UPON TRAVELLERS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

An Inn at Seville.

Enter Don Ramirez and Hostess.

HOSTESS.

THIS way an't please your honour. You are welcome
To Seville, sir. Would'st please to take refreshment?

RAMIREZ.

All in good time. I would repose a little.

HOSTESS.

No doubt your honour must be much fatigued.
Shall I prepare a posset for your honour,
Something that's warm and comfortable?

RAMIREZ.

Pshaw!

Diego!

HOSTESS.

Whom dost your honour please to want?

RAMIREZ.

My rascal whom I left in charge o'th' baggage—

HOSTESS.

Diego! Signor Diego!

Enter Diego, with a Cloakbag, &c.

RAMIREZ.

So, you're come.

DIEGO.

Aye, I am come, and all the things are safe—
But I was forc'd to have my eyes about me.
There were some sparks there standing in the yard,
That look'd as if their fingers itch'd to have 'em.

HOSTESS.

What's that you say, signor?—I'd have you know
None but the best of quality come here.

DIEGO.

They may be quality for ought I know;
But they look'd plaguily like pickpockets.

HOSTESS.

Like pickpockets indeed! A pretty story!
I, who have liv'd here fifteen years, and more,
And held my head up with the best in Seville,

Thus to be taunted.

DIEGO.

Nay, I taunt you not—

But if I ever saw a pickpocket—

RAMIREZ.

Have done.

HOSTESS.

Nay let him, an he will, go on.

I'll bring him up.

DIEGO.

You'll be brought down yourself.

HOSTESS.

I be brought down!—By whom, I pray? by you?—

I tell thee, saucy knave—

RAMIREZ.

Ne'er heed him, madam,

He is untaught.—But I would be alone.

HOSTESS.

Your worship speaks like a good gentleman.

What would your honour please to have for dinner?

There's butcher's meat of all sorts, fish and poultry;

Shall I conduct your worship to the larder?

RAMIREZ.

I'd rather be excus'd: let him go with you.

DIEGO.

Aye, let me see what store you have on board.

Come, dame, I'll follow you :—nay, do not pout,
Shew me good fare, and we'll be friends anon.

[*Exeunt Diego and landlady.*]

RAMIREZ.

So! here am I at length arriv'd in Seville,
Where, thanks to my kind kinsman, Don Alonzo,
I am invited to receive the hand
Of the fair Laura, only child and heir
Of rich Don Guzman. Let me see—in lands,
Of solid rents, some threescore thousand crowns;
In ready cash, pistoles some fourscore thousand.
Why this, so far as money goes, is well.
And yet, I know not—I've but half a heart
To undertake this business.—Clara! Clara!
Thou hast a claim upon me, which my heart,
And honour too, convince me can't be cancell'd.
My evil star was surely in ascendance,
When, in the moment of a peevish quarrel,
Brought on by mine own petulance, I open'd
That letter from Alonzo. Riches, honours,
Flash'd in my view, and with a magnet's force
Seduc'd me hither.

Enter Diego.

DIEGO.

I have got a trifle

To stay my stomach—'Tis a noble larder !
I've order'd you a delicate young capon,
Some nice red trouts, a pretty leg of lamb,
An omelette, with a vermicelli soup,
A partridge and some other little kickshaws—

RAMIREZ.

'Slife, do you mean to feed an army, sirrah ?

DIEGO.

I always like to do the thing genteely,
(*Aside*)—And 'specially when I am not to pay for't.

RAMIREZ.

Hark you me, sir ! Let's have no more of this.
Enquire the way to Don Alonzo's house ;
Tell him I'm here, impatient to embrace him.
And hasten to the tailor, whom he order'd
To make for me a suit, in the same fashion
As those now worn by noblemen at court.
Then find where lives Don Guzman de Pacheco ;
Make my respectful compliments to him
And his fair daughter—

DIEGO.

She you come to wed ?

RAMIREZ.

Ay, sir, the same ; my golden fleece, such as
Jason ne'er saw, my East and Western Indies—
My argosie, freighted with gold and jewels—

DIEGO.

Heav'n help me, I shall ne'er remember half—
 Let's see—to compliment your honour's tailor—
 To tell the rich young lady you're impatient
 T'embrace her—

RAMIREZ.

Silence, sir, no jesting now—
 See you perform my orders punctually.

DIEGO.

Then you're resolv'd to marry this same lady?

RAMIREZ.

Else wherefore came I from Toledo hither?

DIEGO.

An I might do it without risk, I'd ask
 Your honour one plain question.

RAMIREZ.

Ask it freely.

DIEGO.

There's something tempting, I must own, i' th' thought
 Of gaining at a hit a vast estate,
 With no incumbrance on it but a wife,
 And she too, as 'tis said, handsome and young—
 I must confess 'tis tempting.

RAMIREZ.

Well, wise sir,

Say on.

DIEGO.

I'm coming to the point—Now, mark me.
There is a certain lady lives at Elvas—
One Donna Clara—do you know her, sir?

RAMIREZ.

Aye, marry, sir—better than she knows me.

DIEGO.

That may well be; for, as I think, you chose,
Without a godfather, to call yourself
Don Juan Velasco, you may now conceive
That you, as Don Ramirez, are not bound
To stand to what Don Juan strictly promis'd.

RAMIREZ.

Perhaps I may not.

DIEGO.

Nay, sir, as you please,
I'm not your confessor; yet, if I err not,
There was a time, and that not long ago,
When you profess'd yourself her humble servant,
Seem'd never happy but when you was with her,
And, if I don't mistake, your marriage day
Was fix'd; when, on a sudden, why or wherefore
I know not, you decamp'd.

RAMIREZ.

Have you ought else?

DIEGO.

Nay, that's enough.

RAMIREZ.

Then thus I answer you.

When I declar'd my love to Donna Clara,
I was sincere, heav'n knows my heart, I was!—
But wherefore do I talk of this to you?
I thought I had a cause—but what of that?
'Tis past—I would forget it if I could.

DIEGO.

And so poor Donna Clara's left to sigh.

RAMIREZ.

Name her no more!

DIEGO.

I wo'n't—

I'll hold my tongue, and set my teeth in motion.

Enter Hostess.

HOSTESS.

An't please your honour, dinner is serv'd up.

RAMIREZ.

I'll wait upon you madam.

[*Exit Hostess.*

Hark, Diego,

Do what I order'd you. Make no mistakes.

[*Exit.*

DIEGO.

Plague on this state of servitude, I say !
 I've appetites and feelings like my master ;
 Can be fatigued too after a hot journey,
 And can enjoy the luxury of dinner,
 With a cool glass of sparkling Malvoisie,
 To lead me gently on to my siesta.
 But I'm forsooth his lackey, a poor drudge,
 Hungry and tir'd to run upon his errands,
 While he indulges in his easy chair,
 And takes his pleasure. Fortune! thou'rt a jade
 To leave me thus, when, had it been thy will,
 I could have made so fine a gentleman. [Exit.

SCENE II.

The Garden of Donna Clara's House.

Enter Donna Clara and Beatrice.

BEATRICE.

Well, after all, ma'am, were I fit to advise you,
 I'd counsel you to give up this Ramirez,
 And vex and plague yourself no more about him.
 To palm himself upon you for Don Juan,
 To sigh and swear eternal constancy,
 'Till he had drawn you to consent to marriage,
 And then, beswore him for't, to run away,

Forsooth, to marry one, who, I'll be sworn,
No more deserves to be compar'd to you —

CLARA.

Could I take counsel only of my judgment,
I certainly should follow your advice :
But, ah ! my Beatrice, I confess with shame
This truant has an interest in my heart—

BEATRICE.

What, madam, after all his perjuries,
After the letter, which, when he was flown,
I chanc'd to meet with from one Don Alonzo,
Another rakehell like himself I warrant,
Stiling him Don Ramirez, and announcing
That all was ready for his instant marriage
With rich Don Guzman's daughter of this town—

CLARA.

Had it not been for that my heart had burst ;
But now my pride is listed in the cause,
And every passion, which can urge a woman
To vindicate her love, her fame, impels me
To break the trammels which have drawn him hither,
And bring the traitor back to his allegiance.

BEATRICE.

Since things are so, I have no more to say.
But surely 'tis a singular disguise
You mean t'adopt—To quit your rank and station,

And to propose yourself as the duenna
Of this Don Guzman's daughter—

Enter Bertran.

CLARA.

Welcome, good Bertran! Well, what have you done?

BERTHAN.

Let me put off this pedagogue's disguise,
And then I'll answer you.

(Takes off his hat, wig, and cloak.)

Now I can speak.

Whether 'tis zeal, or merely heat o'th' weather
That warms me so, I know not.

CLARA.

Prithee tell me,

Have you succeeded?

BERTHAN.

If it be success,

To strip you for a season of your rank,
And veil your peerless beauties in a cloud,
I have succeeded fully. You are now
I'th' highway to preferment.

CLARA.

Thanks, good Bertran!

Ten thousand thanks!

BERTHAN.

Nay, it is something, look you,

To rise at once to be the only daughter
Of Sancho Perez, schoolmaster at Olmez,
(That's I, I pray you mark) who've lately lost
Your husband, Vincent Nunez, a rich farmer—

BEATRICE.

Have you assign'd no part to me?

BERTRAN.

Oh, yes!

You are my wife—my second wife observe you,—
Who, for some family reasons, not inclining
To keep a widow'd step-daughter at home,
Have counsell'd me to seek for her some station,
Where she may be protected from the arts
Of wicked men.

CLARA.

And this account pass'd current?

BERTRAN.

Like a new ducat. You have nought to do,
But prank you in your grave habiliments,
And hasten with me to Don Guzman's house;
Who waits with more impatience to receive you,
Than sun-burnt fallows do a summer show'r.

CLARA.

Come, girl, let's lose no time: I'm all impatience
To enter on my functions. Do you think
You can discharge your part?

BEATRICE.

Never fear me,
I've not been chambermaid so long for nothing.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

*A public Place in Seville.**Enter Don Carlos.*

CARLOS.

Would I could learn if the report be true
That Laura's hand is promis'd to another !—
Who's this Ramirez ?—What are his pretensions ?
Can her affection then be fix'd on him ?
If so, I'll shew myself deserving of her,
And sacrifice to her my fondest wishes.

Enter Pedrillo.

PEDRILLO.

I'm glad I've found you—there's such news abroad—
I've brought you such intelligence. He's come—

CARLOS.

Who ?—

PEDRILLO.

Don Ramirez.

CARLOS.

What already ?

PEDRILLO.

Aye—

Within this hour he landed from his mule
At the Green Dragon, where he now is hous'd.
Birlady! he's a sightly cavalier,
A young, well-timber'd blade, to all appearance
Not overstock'd with diffidence, and likely
To make advances in a lady's favour.

CARLOS.

What can be done, Pedrillo?

PEDRILLO.

Truly, matters

Do look a little crooked. Yet, I know not—
I have some hopes.—As yet, I've form'd no plan;
But, if I can depend upon my skill
In physiognomy, a certain Diego,
Who waits on Don Ramirez as his lackey,
Is made of clay, which my fine wits may mould
Into a shape subservient to our purpose.
I watch'd him closely even now i'th' inn yard,
As he stood centry o'er his master's cloak-bag,
And took full measure of him.—As I live,
He comes this way.—Now judge of him yourself.

Enter Diego.

DIEGO.

I know not how 't is—but there is something

In a strange place that makes one lose one's way.
 The people at the inn appear'd to give me
 A plain direction—but I cannot find it.
 If I could see some civil gentleman,
 Of whom I could enquire the road—Odso!
 There's two together, decent looking persons—
 Pray, gentlemen, may I make bold to ask—

PEDRILLO (*turning to him*).

You say.—Who are you?—What d'ye want with me?

DIEGO.

I would enquire—But hold!—Aye, you are he—

PEDRILLO.

Am he!—Am who?

DIEGO.

Why one of those same quality,
 Who look'd so sharply at my master's cloak bag,
 As if you long'd to be familiar with it.
 I know you well enough.

PEDRILLO.

Why, friend, you're mad.
 I'm an apothecary.

DIEGO.

That's a good one!

PEDRILLO.

Who keep a shop in St. Jago Street;
 Where, if you want galenicals or drugs,

Cupping, blood-letting, or tooth-drawing, sir,
I shall be honor'd by your worship's favors.

DIEGO.

And so you're an apothecary?

PEDRILLO.

Yes—

And what of that?—

DIEGO.

Mayhap then you've a brother,
Or it may be a cousin who is like you.

PEDRILLO.

I have no brother—nor no cousin either,
Nor uncle, aunt, nor sister, father or mother.

DIEGO.

That's strange!

PEDRILLO.

Not strange at all. It is a way
That we have in our family.

DIEGO.

Well, sir,
Since it is so, I would make free to ask
Where I may find Don Guzman de Pacheco?

PEDRILLO.

What is't you want with him?

DIEGO.

Faith, I want nought;

But I've a little message to deliver.

PEDRILLO.

Then, friend, you'll lose your labour.

DIEGO.

Eh?—Why so?—

PEDRILLO.

Hast thou not heard he is about to marry
His daughter to a brave young gentleman,
One Don Ramirez?

DIEGO.

I have heard it said.

PEDRILLO.

Then know, his time and thoughts are so engag'd,
He will hear nought but what relates to him.

DIEGO.

Then he'll hear me, for I am charg'd to bear
That Don Ramirez' compliments.

PEDRILLO.

Oh ho!—

You are his valet then?—(*Bowing*)—I humbly pray
You'll recommend me to his honor's custom.
My name is Pedro Lobo.

DIEGO.

Pedro Lobo?—

PEDRILLO.

Aye, Pedro Lobo. You shall find me, sir,

A a 3

Most thankful—I will ~~shave~~ you, sir, for nothing.

DIEGO.

That's kind—I'll do't—

PEDRILLO.

Well, I am glad we've met.

I like your looks—you seem a pleasant fellow—

DIEGO.

Oh! yes—I'm very pleasant.—I like you too.

PEDRILLO.

That's well—And so you're going to Don Guzman's?
Have you no other message?

DIEGO.

Yes, I've one.

Only to say my master will wait on him,
As soon as his new suit comes home.

PEDRILLO.

His suit?

Who is his tailor?

DIEGO.

Gil Baptista.

PEDRILLO.

Oh!

I know him—lives not far from Puerta Nova.

DIEGO.

The same. I'll thank you, sir, if you'll direct me
To him and to Don Guzman's.

PEDRILLO.

Look you, friend,
I'll put you in the way. Don Guzman's house
And Gil Baptista's are not far apart.—
And does your master mean to go alone
To pay his visit at Don Guzman's?

DIEGO.

No—

One Don Alonzo, who made up the marriage,
Has settled to go with him.

PEDRILLO (*aside*).

That's unlucky.—

Who is your master's banker here in Seville?

DIEGO.

Faith, I know not.—But prythee, civil sir,
Be pleas'd to point me out the way to go.

PEDRILLO.

Well, honest friend, you must go down yon street—
Not quite to the bottom, but, at the third turning,
Go to the right—

DIEGO.

The right?

PEDRILLO.

Aye, to the right.

Then take the second turning to the left,
And you will find yourself in the great square.

Then cross it, and you'll see two streets before you—

DIEGO.

But which am I to take?

PEDRILLO.

That to the right.

Then turn to the left hand, which will bring you close

• To Gil Baptista's.

DIEGO.

'Tis a plaguy distance,

And somewhat difficult I fear to find:

PEDRILLO.

Not in the least.—You'll come and see me, won't you?

We'll drink a glass together—

DIEGO.

That I will.

PEDRILLO.

And recommend me to your master's custom?

DIEGO.

Basta!—'tis done. Good day to you, kind sir.

A mighty civil worthy gentleman!

[*Exit.*]

PEDRILLO.

I'll keep my word!—I'll follow you up close,

And shave you close too ere I've done with you.

CARLOS.

And so, sir, you are an apothecary.

PEDRILLO.

I'm any thing your service may require.

CARLOS.

What is your project now ?

PEDRILLO.

I've sent that novice
A wild-goose chase, which, I'll engage for't, will
Employ him for some time : meanwhile, my lord,
Go home and write a letter to your love.
My bus'ness leads me to this young spark's tailor.
He's an old friend of mine, who will perhaps
Indulge me with the loan of this same habit
Made for his introduction. If I get it,
Trust to my skill for keeping him at home.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

Don Ramirez's Apartment at the Inn.

Enter Hostess and Don Alonzo.

HOSTESS.

An't please you, this is Don Ramirez's chamber.
I pray your honour, take a chair ; his worship,
Heav'n bless him ! is enjoying his siesta.

ALONZO.

Tell him, I pray you, ma'am, that Don Alonzo
Is here to wait on him.

HOSTESS.

Well, I'll be sworn
You're two as pretty gentlemen to look on ———

ALONZO.

Will you be pleas'd to let him know I'm here?

HOSTESS.

I will your honour—well, it does one good
To look upon you both! [*Exit.*]

ALONZO.

Make haste, I pray.

I long to know what has detain'd him thus,
When I had taken pains to make this match
So plainly advantageous. There is danger
In trifling, when a woman is concern'd.

Enter Ramirez.

RAMIREZ.

Alonzo, this is kind indeed! Most welcome!

ALONZO.

Welcome, my dear Ramirez! I have waited
With more impatience to receive you, than
You shew'd in coming. What! A bridegroom you!
When beauty, youth and fortune, challeng'd you,
To linger thus!

RAMIREZ.

Why truly I'm to blame—
And yet I know not—Prithee ask no questions—

I'm here you see.

ALONZO.

Why, you are grown mysterious.

Is this the ardour which becomes a lover,
Invited, as it were, t'accept the hand
Of Seville's paragon, whose op'ning charms
Might thaw a hermit's frozen heart to love,
Whose rank is equal to your own, whose wealth
Will reinstate the fortunes of your house?

RAMIREZ.

Why as you say—'tis true—I own it all—

ALONZO.

Whence all this myst'ry then, this icy coldness?

RAMIREZ.

Cold?—No, not I—I made what haste I could!
But I was absent when your letter came,
And so it was delay'd—And so you thought me
Cold and mysterious! (*laughs*)—A good joke that,
When a fine girl's in question! Faith, Alonzo,
'Twas really kind of you to think of me.
I warrant me that most men would have wish'd
To keep so rich a treasure to themselves.
But you—In truth you acted handsomely.

ALONZO.

For me, you know, I'm clearly out o'th'question:
My faith's already plighted to another.

She's neither quite so fair, nor quite so rich,
As she whose hand awaits you ; but, you know
When once a man has gain'd a woman's heart,
And giv'n his word to marry her, common honour
Requires him to fulfil it.

RAMIREZ.

Certainly—

ALONZO.

For, were he to draw back from his engagement,
No gentleman would speak to him.

RAMIREZ.

Umph !—No—

ALONZO.

He would be scouted from society,
As one who'd neither faith nor honour in him.
Don't you think so ?

RAMIREZ.

Oh, certainly !

ALONZO.

A fellow,
Who's capable of that, would pick one's pocket.
Would not he, think you ?

RAMIREZ.

Umph !—Undoubtedly—

ALONZO.

But an't you anxious to behold your Laura ?

Trust me she's worth your knowing.

RAMIREZ.

I'm on fire

To see her—

Enter Pedrillo, with a Bundle.

PEDRILLO.

Gentlemen, your humble servant!—(*bowing.*)

ALONZO.

What is't you want, sir?

PEDRILLO.

With your honour's favour,
I am commission'd, sir, to Don Ramirez.

RAMIREZ.

I'm he.

PEDRILLO (*bowing*).

I am your honour's most obsequious,
Most humble—

RAMIREZ.

When you've done, sir, with these cringes,
Perhaps you'll speak your purpose.

PEDRILLO.

I've the honour

To be the representative of Gil Baptista,
Who, at cuff, cape, skirt, sleeve, or pocket, reigns
Without a rival here in Seville.

RAMIREZ.

So—

You are a tailor's journeyman ?

PEDRILLO.

I am, sir.

RAMIREZ.

Hast brought my suit ?

PEDRILLO.

I have it in this fardel. (*Opens his bundle*).

There! I'll ne'er cut an inch of satin more,
Or with my goose smooth down a button-hole,
If there's in Seville so complete a suit.
Wilt please your honour just to try it on ?

RAMIREZ.

Aye, come, let's see your workmanship—Odso!
You set unhandily about it, friend.

PEDRILLO.

Now, if your honour pleases, try it on.
If it should fit you, why—(*aside*)—my pains are lost.

RAMIREZ.

Gently—Why, what's the matter with this sleeve ?
I cannot get my arm through!

PEDRILLO (*aside*).

If you can,
I've thrown away my trouble.—(*To Ramirez*)—Push
away, sir!

You'll get it through at last—The saints defend me,
If you ha'n't pulled away the sleeve!

RAMIREZ.

The deuce!

What can we do?

PEDRILLO.

'Tis of no consequence;
I'll take it home again, an't please your honour,
And stitch it in a trice—'Tis a mere trifle.

ALONZO.

But we are losing time, sir—

PEDRILLO (*aside*).

That's exactly

What I propose you should do—

ALONZO.

We're expected

This moment at Don Guzman's—

PEDRILLO.

I'll be back

Within this half hour—I'm your worship's servant—

(*Going.*)

Enter Diego.

Your worship may be sure—Zooks! he arrived!

DIEGO.

What Pedro Lobo?—What has brought thee here?

PEDRILLO.

I'm in a monstrous hurry—pray don't stop me—
I have been paying my respects—

DIEGO.

That's right.

Has't ask'd for's custom? Has he promis'd thee?

PEDRILLO.

He has—Good afternoon—

DIEGO.

Stay—stay a minute.

I'll say a word or two to clinch the matter.

PEDRILLO.

Not now—

RAMIREZ.

Remember expedition, sir.

PEDRILLO.

Your honour may be sure of it directly.—(*Going*).

DIEGO.

Nay—you shall stay and take a glass with me.

Here—waiter!—

PEDRILLO.

No—not now.—I must begone!—

[*Exeunt Pedrillo and Diego, squabbling.*]

RAMIREZ.

What a provoking circumstance!

ALONZO.

Ne'er mind—
We shall be time enough, so pray be patient—

RAMIREZ.

Were you but interested, sir, as I am,
You'd hardly thank a friend for preaching patience.
But come—while he's repairing my new suit,
Go with me to my chamber. I must give
A few last tasteful touches to my hair,
To make myself quite irresistible.
Nay, you may laugh—but 'tis a serious matter—
The first impression, sir, is ev'ry thing.

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

An Apartment at Don Guzman's.

Enter Don Guzman.

GUZMAN.

FIE on the tediousness of all these knaves!
We shall have Don Ramirez here, before
They've made half preparation. Gaspar! Gomez!
Where are ye all?

Enter Balthazar and other Servants.

BALTHAZAR.

An't please your lordship's honour,
Here is one Sancho Perez at the gate,
Who bad me tell your lordship he has brought
His daughter, widow of one Vincent Nunez,
To wait upon your lordship.

GUZMAN.

Shew them up.

[*Exit Balthazar.*]

Hark you, take care, and mind that all is ready.

We must do honour to our son-in-law.

We'll shew him something, when he comes to Seville.

[*Exeunt Servants.*]

*Enter Donna Clara as a Duenna, Bertran and Beatrice,
as her Father and Mother.*

GUZMAN.

Welcome, my honest friend. Whom have we here?

BERTRAN.

By your permission, good my lord, I come
With my old dame here—

BEATRICE.

Aye, my lord, we're come
To wait on your good lordship.—We're poor people,
Though not so poor but we can keep our station—
Though to be sure, we cannot be expected
To entertain a troop—

BERTRAN.

Will you give o'er?

Come forward, daughter.

GUZMAN.

Od's my life! her looks
Would give her credit for a better station,
Than that she sues for.

BEATRICE.

There my lord's the point—

B b 2

Says I to Sancho, she's too young and handsome,
The world's a wicked world, the men are naught,
Our house will be no better than a fair,
With all their comings in and goings out—
Says I, a nunn'ry is the fittest place!
But, would your lordship think it? At the word,
My madam flounc'd and frump'd, and plainly told us
She'd look for a condition.

GUZMAN.

She said well.

(*To Clara*) So, you'd be a duenna?—Eh! is't so?

CLARA.

If you, my lord, should not object to try me,
I'll strive by zeal and diligence to merit
Your lordship's favour.

GUZMAN.

And, egad! you'll have it.
You know the duties of your place, I warrant?

CLARA.

I would not my professions should outrun
My future service; but, unless the voice
Of common fame hath magnified her virtues,
Your daughter wants but little of my aid.

GUZMAN.

She's a good girl in truth: you'll find her so,
And so will Don Ramirez.—Now for terms.

What is't you ask?

CLARA.

I have some little means,
Which place me 'bove dependence. To be honour'd
By your approval and my lady's favour
Will more than pay my feeble services.
I pray you, good my lord, speak not of terms.

GUZMAN.

Well, well, I won't. I'll take good care of you.
Come, you shall see my daughter. Who is't waits?

Enter Balthazar.

Tell Donna Laura I would see her here.

[Exit Balthazar.]

We're in a monstrous bustle just at present,
For Don Ramirez is expected hourly,
The writings all are drawn, and the espousals
Will instantly take place.—Well, Master Sancho,
I am obliged to you. You may command me.
If there be any thing which you require,
Make free with me.

BERTRAN

I thank your noble lordship.
I want for nothing—a good glass of sherris
Sometimes to glad my heart—

BEATRICE.

For shame, what mean you?

Are these your manners, in his lordship's presence
To talk of filthy sherris?

GUZMAN.

Nay, good dame,—(to *Beatrice*.)

A glass of sherris does no harm.

Enter Donna Laura.

My Laura!

Come, dear!—You know we wanted a duenna,
T'attend you when you're married. Here she is.

LAURA.

This a duenna, sir?

GUZMAN.

Aye, girl—why not?

LAURA.

She's so unlike old Catherina, sir,
Who look'd so cross, and us'd to plague me so—

CLARA.

I hope I shall not plague you.

LAURA.

No, I think not—

You smile, and look as if you were good humour'd;
You're young too—and I'm sure you're very handsome.
Dear! I should like such a duenna vastly.

GUZMAN.

Should you?—Then you shall have her if you please.

There, talk the matter over—get acquainted.
We've so much bus'ness now—Some other time,
When we've more leisure, pray ye call again—

BERTRAN.

Good morrow to your lordship—Come, good dame.

[Exeunt Beatrice and Bertran.]

GUZMAN.

So, so—you've got acquainted—You seem merry.

LAURA.

Dear father! how I am oblig'd to you!
I like her vastly. Pray, ma'am, what's your name?

CLARA.

My name is Nunez, madam.

LAURA.

Nunez? Nunez?

Well, Nunez, let us have no ceremony,
But call me Laura, and I'll call you Nunez.

GUZMAN.

That's right—But get along—we shan't be ready
For Don Ramirez.

LAURA.

Lord papa! I wish
You'd not insist upon my marrying him.
I dare say he's some cross, ill-looking creature—
I cannot bear the thoughts of him—

B b 4

GUZMAN.

Why not?

Go! you're a simpleton.—Heyday! What's here?

*(Clara veils herself.)**Enter Pedrillo and Balthazar.*

PEDRILLO.

I beg, good sir, you'd take no further trouble :
 I can announce myself.—Is that your master?

BALTHAZAR.

Aye—and what then?

PEDRILLO.

Then, sir, I'm your obedient.

I beg, my lord, to pay my humble duty—
 To your good lordship—

GUZMAN.

What's your name? Who are you?

PEDRILLO.

My name is Lazarillo, good my lord ;
 And as to who I am, I am the valét
 Of a Toledan signor—Don Ramirez.

GUZMAN.

Of Don Ramirez?—You are very welcome.
 Well—what of Don Ramirez?

PEDRILLO *(to Balthazar)*.

You perceive

I can announce myself. You may retire.

[*Exit Balthazar.*]

Please you, my lord, I'm charg'd by Don Ramirez
To present compliments, and to deliver
Into you lordship's hands a letter from him.

GUZMAN.

Where is it? Let me see it!—Stay awhile—

(*Puts on his spectacles.*)

(*Reads*)—Aye, aye—"To the most excellent Don Guzman."

Now let me see what Don Ramirez says.

PEDRILLO.

I crave your lordship's pardon—here's another—

GUZMAN.

From Don Ramirez too?

PEDRILLO.

Aye, my good lord.

GUZMAN.

Wasn't one big enough to hold his meaning?

PEDRILLO.

Your lordship misconceives me. This is one,
In which my master ventures to present
His homage to the lovely Donna Laura.

(*Offers it to Laura.*)

GUZMAN.

Hey?—Let me look at it—

FEDRILLO (*holding it*).

You see, my lord,
The superscription is, for Donna Laura.
(*Offers it to her.*)

GUZMAN.

I wish to see a little what he says.
(*Snatches it from him.*)

FEDRILLO (*aside*).

'Sdeath, if he open it our game is up!—
An't please your lordship, I forgot to mention,
My master charg'd me to deliver it
Into the lady's hands. "Look you," said he,
"Acquaint Don Guzman, that I have presum'd
"To pave the way for my admission to her,
"By a few lines of merely compliments,
"Which may just serve to break the ice between us."—

GUZMAN.

Did Don Ramirez say so?

FEDRILLO.

Yes, my lord—

"Perhaps," said he, "you may persuade my lord
"To give it her himself; it will look better,"
Said he, "and ~~seem~~ much more respectful tow'rds him,
"Were you to pray him to deliver it:
"He'll not," said he, "suspect that I should send
"What is improper for his daughter's view—

"I know my duty better than that comes to,"
Said he—

GUZMAN.

Enough!—Well, Laura—here's a letter,
Comes from your lover, child—open it—read—
Let's hear what he can say.

LAURA.

Indeed I shan't.

GUZMAN.

Nay, don't be foolish—read it—I should like
To know if your young fellows now adays
Make love as we were us'd to do.

PEDRILLO.

The lady
Seems bashful. If you were, my lord, to read
Your own, she might take courage.

GUZMAN.

Like enough—
Do as you please, my dearest. *(He reads his letter.)*

PEDRILLO *(aside to Laura)*.

Read it, madam—
'Tis from Don Carlos—I'm his valet—

GUZMAN *(Taking off his spectacles)*.

So!—

A very modest and well written letter.

Enter Diego, opposed by Balthazar.

BALTHAZAR.

Not quite so fast.

DIEGO.

I tell you I must see him—
I'm Don Ramirez' lackey—

PEDRILLO: (*aside*).

He again!

One of us must decamp—so brass assist me.

(*To Diego*)—What's that you say, sir?—Don Ramirez'
lackey?

DIEGO.

Aye, Don Ramirez—Heyday! Pedro Lobo!
What brings you here?

PEDRILLO.

Lobo? What is't you mean?
I'm Don Ramirez' valet.

DIEGO.

Heav'n defend me!
You're an apothecary—

GUERMAN.

What's all this?

PEDRILLO.

My lord, I know not—Here is a rude fellow,
Who calls himself lackey of Don Ramirez.

I know him not.

DIEGO.

'Tis false!—He knows me well.

PEDRILLO.

Do I?—Let's look at you.—Oh! now I know him—
My lord, he is the greatest rogue in Seville—
(*To Diego*)—Ay, I remember you; when we arrived,
I saw you in the court yard of the inn,
With a companion, peeping at our cloakbag.
I notic'd you. The people told me then
What pretty characters you bore, and bad me
Look well to the baggage.

DIEGO.

You're a lying knave,

And I'll come round you—

GUZMAN (*to Pedrillo*).

You remember him?

PEDRILLO.

He's not so easily forgot—An't please you,
Ask him, my lord, if he has brought a letter.
You'll have him there—

GUZMAN.

I will.—(*To Diego*)—Have you a letter?

DIEGO.

A letter, hey?—From whom?—Not I, indeed.

PEDRILLO.

I told you so. Pray question him, my lord,

Who is his master's banker here in Seville?

GUZMAN (*to Diego*).

Dost hear?

DIEGO.

His banker? Faith I never heard.

PEDRILLO.

There, there my lord; you see he's ignorant.

GUZMAN.

You give a bad account, sir, of yourself.

I have a mind to lay you by the heels.

DIEGO.

Why, what the deuce—send me to jail!

PEDRILLO.

Aye, sirrah!

And treat you with a cat-o'-nine-tails, varlet!

I'll firk and ferret you!—I'll teach you how

To play your rogue's tricks here—

DIEGO.

Odsso! keep off—

Why what's the matter with you, Pedro Lobo?

PEDRILLO.

I'll Pedro Lobo you! Let me come at him!—

DIEGO.

I tell you I'm Diego—

GUZMAN.

Here! Balthazar!

PEDRILLO.

Leave him to me!—(*Catches Diego by the throat.*)

DIEGO.

W—w—what d'ye mean to throttle me?—

Why, Pedro Lobo—

PEDRILLO.

Out! you scurvy knave!

[*Exit Diego.*]

I've done his business for him.

GUZMAN.

Is he gone?

I would have giv'n him to an Alguazil,

And made him an example! Paltry knave!

To palm himself.—I'll have the rogue brought back.

PEDRILLO.

I'll find him out—I'll take good care of him—

GUZMAN.

There'll be an end of justice if he 'scape.

An impudent impostor! (*Walks about.*)

CLARA (*to Pedrillo*).

Hark! a word—

In some half hour be sure you come again—

Ask for the widow Nunez—

PEDRILLO.

Hush, enough—

GUZMAN.

Be sure you overtake him—

PEDRILLO.

Has your lordship

No further orders for your humble servant?

GUZMAN.

None, but my best respects, and earnest hope
We shall soon see your master Don Ramirez.

PEDRILLO.

Your lordship may be certain of his coming.
I pay my humble duty to your lordship. (*As if going.*)

GUZMAN (*to Laura and Clara*).

A clever fellow that! Come, follow me.

[*Exit with Laura, Clara following.*]

PEDRILLO (*to Clara*).

Hist!

CLARA (*returning*).

Don't detain me, pray—

PEDRILLO.

When I come back,

You'll have a little billet,—a small word
Of comfort for a poor despairing lover—

CLARA.

I'll do my best to serve you—there—begone—
I'm ruin'd if I stay—

PEDRILLO.

Good luck go with you !

You're a kind hearted creature—

CLARA.

You're a rogue!—

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE II.

Don Ramirez's Apartment.

Don Ramirez and Don Alonzo discovered seated.

ALONZO.

Come, one glass more to the fair Laura's health.

RAMIREZ.

A bumper to her fourscore thousand crowns !

There's magic in the sound !—But where's Diego ?

Just at this moment, when my fancy teems

With images so blissful, thus to linger !

ALONZO.

Why how can his delay affect you thus ?

RAMIREZ (*rising*).

How, sir?—My all depends on his return.

I sent him to Don Guzman's to announce

My arrival here in Seville. Till he come,

I cannot venture to present myself.

ALONZO.

Nay, nay, be patient—he's perhaps return'd.

I'll step and ask.

[*Exit.*

RAMIREZ.

That is indeed most kind.

Delay is ruin to a heart like mine,

Which bitter recollection still must wound.

Oh! Clara! Clara! still thine image haunts me,

And damps the ardour which should fill my soul.

Enter Alonzo.

ALONZO.

'Tis as I thought—Diego is return'd,

But in a strange condition. I ne'er saw

A fellow so bewilder'd. I attempted

In vain to learn what had betided him,

For, 'stead of making me reply, he stood

Gaping and staring on me.—Here he is.

Enter Diego.

RAMIREZ.

Well, sir—what bring you?

DIEGO.

I have brought myself—

Though that's a lie—for, what with fright and running,

I'm sure I've melted half myself away.

Catch me at that old fellow's house again,

And give me what he promis'd me, a whipping.

RAMIREZ.

What means the fool?

DIEGO.

The fool shew'd good discretion ;
 For, when they threaten'd him with jail and whipping,
 He shew'd them a good pair of heels.

RAMIREZ.

Who threaten'd ?

DIEGO.

Why, the old Don himself, and Pedro Lobo.

RAMIREZ.

Who's he ?—

DIEGO.

You knew him well enough e'en now—
 Th'apothecary, whom you chose to call
 A tailor.

RAMIREZ.

What had he to do ?

DIEGO.

I know not :

But they both fac'd me down he was your valet.

RAMIREZ.

Don Guzman fac'd you down, sir ?

DIEGO.

Aye, Don Guzman—

A queer old blade—and as for Pedro Lobo—

RAMIREZ.

Pshaw ! Nonsense ! This is one of your old pranks.

Hark you me, sir—I'm going to Don Guzman's :
 Do you repair to th' post office, and ask
 For any letters which may come for me,
 And bring them to Don Guzman's instantly.

DIEGO.

If Pedro Lobo should be there ?

RAMIREZ.

Again ?

Let's hear no more of this. Begone ! I say.
 Come, friend Alonzo !—Now let us set forward.

[*Exit with Alonzo.*]

DIEGO.

Begone !—'Fore gad I know not where to go.
 At ev'ry turn I pounce on Pedro Lobo.
 Go where I will, still Pedro Lobo's there ;
 In house, in street, in church or in exchange,
 He haunts me like a sprite ! I do believe
 My sins are doom'd to visit me in Seville,
 And Pedro Lobo is the devil himself,
 Who brings the catalogue to drive me mad ! [Exit.]

SCENE III.

An Apartment in Don Guzman's House.

Enter Donna Laura and Donna Clara.

LAURA.

How kind you are to pity my distress !

I'm very thankful to you. If you knew
How much my Carlos merits my affection,
You would not wonder at my loving him.

CLARA.

There's nothing wonderful, that a young heart
Like your's should yield itself to first impressions.

LAURA.

You've known then what it is to love?

CLARA.

I have :

And known what 'twas to meet an ill return.
Ah my young lady! love's a fearful thing!

LAURA.

Dear Nunez, how you frighten me—Sure love
Is not so dreadful as you represent him.
To me he seems all gentleness and pleasure;
So kind his aspect, so benign his look,
The heart that can resist his first approaches,
Must be a harder one than mine.

CLARA.

Oh Laura!

I thought so once,—but—we have said enough—
May your lov'd Carlos never give you cause
To change your sentiments!—

LAURA.

He never can.

Oh Nunez! could you see him, hear him speak,
You'd own he well deserv'd my constancy.

CLARA.

You are resolv'd then not to wed Ramirez?

LAURA.

Most positively. After all, you know,
My father can but scold and threaten me;
And though sometimes he's whimsical enough,
I know the way to manage him. Besides,
I'll lay my life upon it, this Ramirez
Is some ill-favour'd, awkward, proud hidalgo,
With store of gold, who lives in an old castle,
Moated all round, hung with torn tap'stry work'd
With scripture histories, and trimm'd with velvet,
That once was crimson—faugh! I'm sick to think on't.

CLARA.

You give a good description of your lover,
But 'tis not a correct one. Don Ramirez
Is not what you describe him.

LAURA.

Have you seen him?—

CLARA.

Yes—I have seen him—

LAURA.

Have you?—Is he handsome?

CLARA.

He's so esteemed.

LAURA.

As handsome as Don Carlos?

CLARA.

Whether you'll think him so I cannot tell.

LAURA.

Is he genteel and noble in his manners?
Does he dress well?—For instance—like Don Carlos?

CLARA.

He's thought the most accomplish'd man in Spain.

LAURA.

Dear! I should like to see him. You have rais'd
My curiosity—

CLARA (*aside*).

Ha!—Is it so?

I may have gone too far.—(*To Laura*) Should you, my
dear?

That's strange, when, as you just now said, Don Carlos
Engrosses your affection.

LAURA.

So he does;

And yet, if Don Ramirez be so handsome,
And so accomplish'd, where's the harm of wishing
Just to look at him?—

CLARA.

There's no harm, my dear,
But there may be some danger.

LAURA.

How?

CLARA.

I mean

In trusting to appearances. I've heard—
Can you keep secrets?

LAURA.

Oh yes! You may trust me.

What is't?—

CLARA.

My father's house is near Toledo :
We often went there, so we knew what pass'd.
Now it was known there was a certain lady,
By name Lucretia, daughter of a notary,
With whom this Don Ramirez was suspected—

LAURA.

How?

CLARA.

He was always going to and fro ;
Though he was forced to be upon his guard,
For then my lord, his father, was alive.
At length, the old man died : when, all at once,
Out came the secret.

LAURA.

What was it, good Nunez ?

CLARA.

Would you believe it ? This Lucretia swore
That this same Don Ramirez had seduc'd her
Under a promise of espousing her.
The notary, poor man ! call'd on Ramirez
To execute his promise, but in vain ;
For, when he found the matter was grown serious,
He thought it prudent to decamp.

LAURA.

And what
Became of poor Lucretia ?

CLARA.

There she stays,
Almost heart broken. Ere I came away,
'Twas rumour'd Don Ramirez was engag'd
To marry a young lady here in Seville.
Her name I heard not ; but I find 'tis you.

LAURA.

I marry him ! You surely cannot think it—
A reprobate like him !—I'd sooner turn
A nun at once.—Do, Nunez, stand my friend—
I'm sure you're too good-natur'd to refuse me.

CLARA.

I know not what to say—I would do much

T'assist you.—Yes—I think you're right, my dear—

LAURA.

I knew you'd say so.—What! a man like that!

CLARA.

A libertine! One too betroth'd already!

'Tis wonderful he can have the assurance

To look you in the face.—But never mind—

Don't let him guess that you have learnt his secret,

But treat him, when he's introduc'd to you,

With due civility.—Come, cheer up, ma'am—

We'll prove a match for him, I warrant you.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

An Apartment in Don Guzman's House.

Enter Don Guzman.

GUZMAN.

This wedding is a glorious circumstance.

I feel that it revives me like a cordial,

And makes me think of old times.—O! 's my life!

Old as I am, methinks I'm young enough—

To be a principal in these affairs—

Enter Balthazar.

BALTHAZAR.

The gentlemen are come. I saw 'em stop

At the great gate.

GUZMAN.

Go, go, get you away ;
See you conduct them in with proper state.

[*Exit Balthazar.*]

Aye, aye, I hear 'em. If report speak true,
My future son-in-law's a sightly fellow.
I knew his grandfather.—Odso, they're coming—
Now for them—

*Enter Don Ramirez and Don Alonzo, conducted by
Servants.*

Don Alonzo, my good friend !
You are most welcome. Is that gentleman—

ALONZO.

This, my good lord, is Don Ramirez—

GUZMAN (*to Ramirez*).

Sir,

I'm honour'd by your presence ; I rejoice
To see you here on this occasion.

RAMIREZ.

My lord, I'm yours.—(*Looking round*)—A very noble
house !

GUZMAN.

What did you say ? I'm somewhat thick of hearing.

ALONZO.

My cousin spoke, my lord, about the honour.

Your lordship does him.

GUZMAN.

Sir, the honour's mine.

(*To Ramirez*) I was acquainted with your grandfather—
He was a worthy gentleman, who kept
An excellent good table, and was noted
For a receipt he had for stewing carp.
Pray have you got a copy of it?

RAMIREZ.

Sir!

GUZMAN.

They were most excellent. He often ask'd me
To dine with him; but we could never get him
To tell us how he dress'd 'em.—Worthy man!
He lov'd good eating—but he's gone! he's gone!

(*Stands musing.*)

RAMIREZ (*to Alonzo*).

Is this the house he has agreed to give us?

ALONZO.

The same.

GUZMAN (*musings*).

He's gone! he lov'd a haunch of ven'son
With currant jelly sauce—but he is gone!—(*Still musing.*)

RAMIREZ (*to Alonzo*).

Do'st see those hangings? I will have 'em chang'd;
They're out of fashion'd things—

ALONZO.

Hush ! he'll o'erhear you.

GUZMAN (*to Ramirez*).

I'll warrant me, that you young fellows now
Think yourselves far superior to us old ones.
Confess now—

RAMIREZ.

Why, my lord—

GUZMAN.

Nay, never mind—

There's no harm in't—

RAMIREZ.

As far as taste, my lord—

There we perhaps—when things are out of fashion—

GUZMAN.

Of fashion !—Pray then what may you like better ?

RAMIREZ.

What do I like ?

A partridge brown, my lord, sprinkled with silver—

'Tis now the only taste.

GUZMAN.

That must be curious.

Is't stew'd or roasted ?

RAMIREZ.

Sir !—(*to Alonzo*)—What is't he means ?

GUZMAN.

Well—give me the receipt—we'll have it tried—
It shall be serv'd up at your wedding dinner.
Odso! you have not seen my daughter yet—
You must be all impatience.—Who waits there?

Enter Balthazar.

Go and acquaint my daughter, Don Ramirez
Is just arrived, and beg her to come here.

[Exit Balthazar.]

(To Ramirez) Give me your hand, signor, I'm glad to
see you :

You put me so in mind of your grandfather !
He was just such another as yourself,
Only, he limp'd a little in his gait,
And squinted with one eye.—You're vastly like him.

RAMIREZ.

My lord, I thank you for your compliment.
(To Alonzo) A dev'lish queer old fellow this!

GUZMAN *(to Alonzo)*.

What says he?

ALONZO.

He says your lordship flatters him.

GUZMAN.

Not I—

The family resemblance is amazing.

Here comes my girl. Now tell me what you think.

Enter Donna Laura with Donna Clara veiled.

Laura, my love!—Here's Don Ramirez, child,
Who comes to see you.

RAMIREZ (*kneeling*).

Suffer me to pay

My homage, madam, where 'tis justly due.

Thus let me kneel, and on your hand impress

A symbol of the vassalage I owe you.

LAURA.

I pray you rise, signor.—(*To Clara*)—He's well enough!

CLARA (*to Laura*).

I told you his appearance was engaging.

But mum!

GUZMAN.

Well, signor, how do you like her, hey?

RAMIREZ.

She is a constellation of perfections!

GUZMAN (*to Laura*).

Well—what dost think of him?—Why dost not answer?

CLARA.

Your lordship flurries her—she's inexperienced,
And not accustom'd to these introductions.

GUZMAN.

Poor dear, I know she's bashful.

RAMIREZ.

Pray, my lord,

Who is that other lady, who, like night,
Shrouds her perfections in a sable veil?

GUZMAN.

Good—very good!—You'd have the moon shine,
would you?

Faith! she's worth looking at!—Come, Mrs. Nunez,
Throw off that wrapper.—

CLARA.

Pardon me, my lord—

I know my station, and must wear it thus.

GUZMAN.

She is my girl's duenna, gentlemen,
But devilish handsome, I can promise you.
(*To Ramirez*)—You'd be surpriz'd were you to see her face.
(*To Clara*)—If you won't take it off, just open it,
And let us have a peep—there's no harm in't.

CLARA.

Excuse me, pray; I know my duty better.

GUZMAN.

There is the lawyer in another room,
Putting the last hand to the settlements.
We'll go and read them over, if you please.
Signor Ramirez! take my daughter's hand. [*Exeunt.*

Manet Clara.

CLARA.

With what confirm'd assurance he bears up !
 Alas ! Ramirez ! is it come to this ?
 Are all the protestations, vows and oaths
 Of endless truth you utter'd, gone for ever ?
 Is Clara's image blotted from your soul,
 And all her tenderness, her confidence,
 Her faith, too rashly plighted, thus forgotten ?

Enter Diego.

DIEGO.

So far all's well—I'm terribly alarm'd,
 And quake from head to foot—I'd give ten ducats
 I were safe back again.—Where'er I turn,
 It seems to me I'm meeting Pedro Lobo—
 Who's that ?—Oh ! nobody but an old woman.

CLARA.

What can he want ?

DIEGO.

I've met with no one yet,
 But Pedro Lobo's ghost, that haunts me still
 With jails and whipping-posts. Would I could learn
 Whether he's here—Perhaps th' old woman knows.—
 Hark you, old lady !

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CLARA.

Do you call me, sir?

DIEGO.

I wish you'd tell me, if one Pedro Lobo
Be here or not?

CLARA.

One Pedro Lobo, sir?

DIEGO.

Aye, Pedro Lobo :—He's a royst'ring blade—

CLARA (*aside*).

I'll feign to know him—it may drive him hence.
Oh, yes, I know him—he comes often here.

DIEGO.

The deuce he does!

CLARA.

He may be here just now.

There is no answ'ring for him.

DIEGO.

You don't say so!

Pray tell me, is my master, Don Ramirez,
Here in your house?

CLARA.

He is—what want you with him?

DIEGO.

I've been to th' post office, and—here they are—

Have brought him sundry letters from Toledo.
 I pray thee tell me where he may be found,
 That I may go ere Pedro Lobo come.

CLARA.

He's closetted at present with my lord :
 But if you'll trust 'em to my charge, good friend,
 I'll carefully deliver 'em.

DIEGO.

That's kind—
 You will be certain now to let him have 'em ?

CLARA.

You may depend on me. You'd better go—
 I'm sure I hear him—Pedro Lobo's coming—

DIEGO.

Oh lord ! oh lord ! I'm off !—Good bye, old dame—

[*Exit.*]

CLARA.

These letters from Toledo—Let me think—
 Cannot I make some use of them ?—I have it !—
 Now Don Ramirez, I'll be even with you :
 You shall have letters more than you expect.

[*Sits down and writes.*]

“ Your perfidy ”—Ay, that's no bad beginning—
 Hum—“ your ingratitude—your plighted faith ”—
 Hum ; — “ Brother — vengeance — husband ” — that's
 enough—

Now to conclude—"your injured wife, Lucretia."—

(Folds up the letter.

Where have I put my seal—a bleeding heart?

Oh! here it is—*(Seals it.)*—So,—go there with the rest.

(Mixes it with the others.

Enter Pedrillo.

PEDRILLO.

Is the coast clear?

CLARA.

Aye, you may venture in.

PEDRILLO.

I come, good madam, as you order'd me,
To know your pleasure—

CLARA.

Signor Lazarillo,

You're punctual to your assignation, sir.

PEDRILLO.

I'm always punctual in a lady's service.

(Aside)—My assignation—'tis a phrase of meaning.

Have you, good madam, thought of any project

T'assist our cause?—"Tis desperate without you—

CLARA.

I have—my lady has prepar'd a letter
For your good master.—Tarry here awhile,
I'll fetch it for you, good kind Lazarillo!

[Exit.

PEDRILLO.

Ho!—*good—kind—*punctual to your assignation!
 Why how if this duenna be attracted
 By my good parts—'T would not be so surprizing—
 'Tis not the first time I've done execution—

Re-enter Clara.

CLARA.

Well, Lazarillo—here's an answer for you.
 I hope you've form'd a good opinion of me.

PEDRILLO.

You are the queen and empress of duennas!

CLARA.

Be quiet—hush!—Whom have we here?—Oh!
 friends—

Enter Beatrice and Bertran.

Come hither—We have got a new associate.
 He'll tell you his own story at more leisure.
 Now we are friends, and part'ners in one cause,
 I'll use disguise no longer—You shall see me.—(*Unveils.*)

PEDRILLO.

Oh! my dear madam!—(*Aside*)—Gad! if I had guess'd
 The shell held such a kernel—

CLARA.

Hark ye, Beatrice—

Have you prepar'd all things as I directed?

BEATRICE.

All's ready—not a tittle is forgotten.

CLARA.

Have you dispatch'd the note to Don Ramirez?

BERTRAN.

'Tis lying ready for him at his lodging.

CLARA (*to Pedrillo*).

Now, sir, if you're as well dispos'd to break
This match as I am—

PEDRILLO.

Try me—what's your plan?

CLARA.

I've one now ripe for execution,
In which, so please you, you may bear a part.

PEDRILLO.

If I don't top it, figo on my talents!
Trust me for putting tricks on travellers!

[*Exeunt severally.*]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in Don Guzman's House.

*Don Guzman, Don Ramirez, Don Alonzo, Cuchillo, and
Donna Laura, discovered at a Table with Writings, &c.*

GUZMAN.

I HOPE you find it right?

RAMIREZ.

Quite right, my lord.—

Master Cuchillo! pray, good sir, go on.

CUCHILLO (*reading*).

“Item, the said Don Guzman doth engage

“On the said day of marriage to pay down

“To the said Don Ramirez”—

RAMIREZ.

Gently now—

A little slower if you please.

CUCHILLO.

Ahem!—

“The sum of fourscore thousand—hem—pistoles”—

RAMIREZ.

Aye, fourscore thousand.

GUZMAN.

That is right, you know.

Such was our bargain.

RAMIREZ.

Fourscore thousand pistoles—

Go on, sir.

CUCHILLO.

“ Item, the said Don Ramirez

“ Doth for himself, his heirs, and his assigns,

“ Promise and covenant, and by these presents

“ Doth bind himself, his heirs and his assigns,

“ That he the said”—

Enter Clara.

CLARA.

I ask your lordship's pardon—

GUZMAN.

Well, Mrs. Nunez—

CLARA.

Here are certain letters

Addressed to Don Ramirez—

RAMIREZ.

Burn the letters!

Put 'em down there—I'm not at leisure now

To look at 'em.—(*To Cuchillo*) Where did you leave off, sir?

CLARA (*to Laura*).

There's one of them, I'm sure, is from a woman.
If it should be from poor Lucretia, madam!

RAMIREZ (*to Clara*).

Why can't you put 'em down? (*To Cuchillo*) Pray, sir, go on.

LAURA (*to Clara*).

How I should like to know what it contains!

CLARA (*to Laura*).

Pretend you're jealous, madam.

RAMIREZ (*to Cuchillo*).

Go on, sir.

CUCHILLO.

They interrupt me so, I've lost my place.

RAMIREZ (*to Clara*).

Will you be pleas'd to put those letters down?

CLARA.

There, sir, they are—(*throws them before Laura*).

LAURA (*taking up one*).

Hey day! What letter's this?

This is a woman's hand.

RAMIREZ.

A woman's hand?

LAURA.

Aye, sir, and for a seal a bleeding heart.
I'm sure it is a woman's.

GUZMAN.

Let me see—

It is a woman's hand beyond dispute—
A kind of scrawling up and down.—So, sir!
You've female secret correspondents then?—

RAMIREZ.

Not I, my lord.

GUZMAN.

I'll lay a hundred ducats
It is a woman's hand. There's no mistaking.

CUCHILLO.

Oh! it's a woman's hand, 'a very woman's.

LAURA (*to Clara*).

Look, Nunez—

CLARA.

Why—the hand is like a woman's.
There is, perhaps, no harm in't, after all.
Young gentlemen may be a little wild,
And there are women too, fond of intrigue;
But I would not infer that this is one.

GUZMAN.

Egad! there's something though in what you say.

ALONZO.

You'd better open it, my friend, at once.
You can have no objection.

RAMIREZ.

Not the slightest—

You are at liberty to open it;
Or, if you please, my lord, you've my free leave
To read it here to all this good assembly.

GUZMAN.

Aye, give it me—(*puts on his spectacles and reads*)

“My dear, though false Ramirez—

RAMIREZ.

What's that?

GUZMAN.

Nay, silence.—“Though your perfidy,
“Your base ingratitude, and cruel breach
“Of your oft' plighted faith”—Heyday! the lady
Begins her letter well—

RAMIREZ.

My lord, I beg—

GUZMAN.

Nay, sir, we'll give it a fair hearing—stay—
Oh aye!—“your plighted faith might warrant me
“To let my brother's vengeance take its course,
“Yet since you are my husband”—Fire and fury!
What is't you mean, sir?—Give me leave to tell you—

RAMIREZ.

My lord, I'm overwhelm'd with consternation—

LAURA.

No wonder. You! a married man, to think
Of treating me in this outrageous manner!

ALONZO.

Ramirez! I've a right to know the truth.

RAMIREZ.

By heav'n! I know no more of it than you.

ALONZO.

What is her name?

RAMIREZ.

I know not.

GUZMAN.

Then I'll tell you—

(Puts on his spectacles again.)

Here 'tis in black and white, sign'd at full length—
(Reads) “ Your injur'd wife, Lucretia de Monsalvo!”
The evidence is full.

CUCHILLO.

Aye, luce clarius!

RAMIREZ.

My lord, I must and will have this explain'd.

GUZMAN.

It wants no explanation—*(to Laura)*—Come, my love,
Let's leave the gentleman to his reflections.

(*To Ramirez*) I wish you, sir, good day.

[*Exeunt Guzman and Laura.*]

RAMIREZ.

One word, Alonzo!

ALONZO.

Aye two, sir!—You shall hear from me anon. [*Exit.*]

RAMIREZ.

Was ever man so us'd!—Master Cuchillo!

CUCHILLO.

The clearest nonsuit that I ever saw! [*Exit.*]

RAMIREZ.

Distraction, fire, and fury! I could bite
My fingers off for madness! No one hear me!

(*He sees Clara.*)

Oh! Mrs. Nunez! you're a worthy woman;
You've had experience in the world—

CLARA.

Good lack!

I have indeed,

RAMIREZ.

I knew it, Mrs. Nunez—
Now, Mrs. Nunez, if you'll stand my friend,
And try to set this matter right—

CLARA.

Who! I?

What is't you think of me, signor, to fancy

That I should interfere in such a business,
'When you've a wife already ?

RAMIREZ.

Heav'n and earth !

I tell you I have none.

CLARA.

Well, that is strange !

No previous contract ?

RAMIREZ.

No.

CLARA.

No promise neither—

No plighted vows, no maiden left to weep

Your falsehood and inconstancy ?

RAMIREZ.

On mine honour,

I know not this Lucretia de Monsalvo.

You'll be my friend now ?

CLARA.

Prove yourself deserving,

And you'll find me your friend.—Look at me, signor !

Lay your right hand upon your heart, and say

If that accord with your assurances.

If but a spark of honour harbour there,

'Twill beat responsive to your touch, and gift you

With pow'r at once to satisfy my doubts.

RAMIREZ (*confusedly*).

Why, certainly your observation's just—
A man of honour—When you know me better,
You'll find how falsely I have been accus'd.

CLARA.

Well, sir, I willingly would take your word.
Dare you appear once more before my lady,
And in her presence ratify your truth?

RAMIREZ.

Madam, you'll find me ready—I would clear
My character at once. I'll follow you.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Another Apartment in Don Guzman's House.

*Enter Don Guzman, Don Alonzo, Cuchillo, and Donna
Laura.*

ALONZO.

My lord, there's no one has more cause than I
To take offence at Don Ramirez' conduct:
And yet I own it puzzles me to guess,
Why, were he thus engag'd, he should have press'd me
To introduce him as your daughter's suitor.

GUZMAN.

'Tis beyond all belief.

ALONZO.

I almost think

There must be some mistake.

GUZMAN.

Why, as you say,

There may be a mistake.

ALONZO.

And yet that letter—

GUZMAN.

Aye, there's no getting over that.

ALONZO.

I know not—

His character has always been esteem'd

Most excellent.

GUZMAN.

That's strongly in his favour.

ALONZO.

Right, my good lord, it is the only test,
By which a doubtful matter can be tried.

CUCHILLO.

You'll give me leave to say, sir, character
Can never weigh against plain evidence.

GUZMAN.

That's true—no more it can.

Enter Ramirez and Clara.

What ! here again ?

RAMIREZ.

I have no reason to avoid you.

GUZMAN.

No?

RAMIREZ.

No. I've already said, and say again,
I know not that Lucretia de Monsalvo.

GUZMAN.

How comes her letter then directed to you?

RAMIREZ.

I know no more than you—or Mrs. Nunez.

CLARA.

Nay, then, you know but little.

RAMIREZ.

On mine honour!—

CLARA.

You still persist in your denial, sir?

RAMIREZ.

I do, most resolutely.

CLARA.

Who knows then,

If this same letter may not, after all,
Prove a mere forgery?

GUZMAN.

What's that you say?

CLARA.

There is no doubting Don Ramirez' honour;
And he, you hear, denies it.

RAMIREZ.

Certainly.

CLARA.

As for the letter, any one might write it,
Either to gratify some private pique,
Or else from love of mischief, or, what's worse,
From a desire to interrupt his nuptials.

RAMIREZ.

Nothing more likely.—Nay—I pray you hear.
Go on, good Mrs. Nunez.

CLARA.

I've known people,
Who took delight in these malicious jokes.
This may be some of their performances.

RAMIREZ.

It's ten to one.

CLARA.

Now, if you weigh the matter,
You have in one scale this disputed letter,
In th' other, Don Ramirez' solemn word.

ALONZO.

In truth, my lord, there's much in what she says.
I am afraid we've acted hastily.

GUZMAN.

D'ye think so?—Nay—it may be so indeed.
 (To Ramirez)—If we have been mistaken, Don Ramirez!
 I know not what apology to make.
 Come, Laura, tell me, are you satisfied?

LAURA.

I'm only much surpriz'd that Mrs. Nunez—

OLARA.

Let me but say a word in private, madam—

[They talk apart.]

ALONZO.

Ramirez, there's my hand—I ask your pardon,
 For doubting your good faith.

GUZMAN.

And here is mine.

But you must own the circumstance was strong.

CUCHILLO.

I've known a man hang'd before now on weaker.

RAMIREZ.

My lord, and you my worthy friend, and you
 Master Cuchillo, give me all your hands;
 I heartily forgive you. On my soul.
 There's something so absurd in the whole story,
 So monstrously ridiculous—ha! ha!
 I can't help laughing—

GUZMAN.

And you look'd so queer,
And fum'd and fretted—when I think of it,
I can't help laughing too—Eh! Don Alonzo?
Master Cuchillo?—'Twas a pleasant joke.—(*All laugh.*)

Enter Balthazar.

BALTHAZAR.

My lord, there are some persons at the gate,
Who ask to see your lordship.

GUZMAN (*still laughing*).

Who are they?

BALTHAZAR.

One calls herself Lucretia de Monsalvo—

GUZMAN.

The deuce she does!

LAURA.

Now, what d'ye think, my lord?

GUZMAN.

I know not what to think—(*to Balthazar*)—Bid her
come up. [*Exit Balthazar.*]

Why, Don Ramirez, what's the matter with you?
You stand aghast.

RAMIREZ.

I'm so amazed, my lord—

GUZMAN.

I do not doubt it in the least.—Odslife!
Here they all come—Now we shall find it out.

Enter Beatrice as Lucretia, and Bertran as a Notary.

Well, madam, what are your commands with us?

BEATRICE.

I come for justice against Don Ramirez,
Who here is come a suitor to your daughter,
While all the time he is my wedded husband.

RAMIREZ.

My lord, this grows a very serious matter.
'Tis a conspiracy to blast my fame.

BERTRAN.

You'd best not say so—We are honest people,
Well look'd on in Toledo, and, 'till you
Seduc'd my girl, consorting with the best.
Will you pretend to say you know me not,
Miguel Monsalvo?—Who have here the bond
You gave her, promising to marry her
Under the penalty of—

GUZMAN.

Pray let me see it.

Master Cuchillo, look at it.

CUCHILLO.

Hum! ha!

The bond's a good and most sufficient bond.

E e 3

BEATRICE (*to Ramirez*).

Turn, turn those stern forbidding eyes upon me !
Let me again embrace you !

RAMIREZ.

'Sdeath ! keep off !

My lord—Alonzo—I appeal to you—

ALONZO.

Make no appeal to me, sir, I renounce
Your friendship ! Never speak to me again !

RAMIREZ.

Are you all mad ? My lord, you shall repent this,
(*To Alonzo*) And so shall you, sir !—You are all combin'd
With these impostors ; but I will have justice—
Keep off, thou crocodile !—Away—away—
By heav'n ! I'll make examples of you all ! [Exit.

ALONZO.

My lord, I'm petrified. I hope your lordship
Will not conceive I knew ought of the matter—

GUZMAN.

Sir, I acquit you fully. But your friend—

ALONZO.

He is no more a friend of mine, my lord.

GUZMAN.

To treat my daughter thus !—(*To Laura*.)—Come, my
poor love,
(*To Alonzo*) And you, good sir—and you, Master Cuchillo,

Let's talk the matter over.—Mrs. Núñez!
 Let these poor people here have hearty welcome.
 I'll speak to them again before they go.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

A Garden. On one Side an Arbour, on the other a Summer-house.

Enter Pedrillo, and a female Servant.

PEDRILLO.

Now, Flora! place yourself behind yon clump.
 Be ready when I call.—Mind what I told you.

[*Exit Flora.*]

Well, I'm a lucky dog!—I cannot chuse
 But laugh at my success—(*puts a purse in his pocket*)

There—lie thou there—

Thou'lt soon have a twin-brother, if Don Carlos—
 Ha!—Who comes here?

Enter Ramirez.

Oh! sir—I'm glad you're come.

If it may please your honour to retire
 Into yon summer house, the lady Laura
 Will join you speedily.

RAMIREZ.

Thanks, my good fellow—

I will reward thee amply.

PEDRILLO.

This way, sir.

(They go into the summer-house.)

Enter Don Carlos.

CARLOS.

The gate left open, as it were t'invite
My free access! I'll in—What! no one here?—
Surely no accident has interven'd
To keep my Laura. Since I grew a lover,
I am become a child; my froward humour
Tinges each trifle with misfortune's hue,
And makes me start at shadows. I'm asham'd
Of mine own weakness. Surely I have proofs
Of Laura's love; then why should I despond?

Enter Pedrillo.

PEDRILLO.

You're come in time.

CARLOS.

Is Donna Laura here?

'Tis past the hour, I think.

PEDRILLO.

I would exhort

Your lordship to be patient; but I know

A lover's calculation far outruns

The tardy foot of time.

CARLOS.

To one like me,

On whom a dawn of hope begins to break,

Each moment seems an hour.—But hark!—Who comes?

Perhaps 'tis she—Is it? It is my Laura!

Enter Clara richly dressed and veiled—Laura and her maid.

LAURA.

Yes, I believe so—But I am so frighten'd,

I hardly know if I'm myself or not.

CARLOS.

To what propitious pow'r am I oblig'd

For this unlook'd for happiness?

LAURA.

To none,

But this mad-headed, friendly, dear duenna,

Who chaparon'd me here to visit you.—

But I've a thousand things to say to you—

CLARA.

You'd better say them then in yonder arbour,

For here you'll chance to meet with interruptions.

LAURA.

Why, you strange creature, would you shut me up

In private with a cavalier like him?

PEDRILLO.

Why make objection, when there's no occasion?

Your maid here, Margarett, will be with you.

LAURA.

What would Don Guzman say?

CLARA.

A pretty question!

You'd best go home again, my tim'rous dear,
And ask his leave.

LAURA.

You'll make me hate you, Nunez!

CARLOS.

Let her persuade you—you may safely trust me.

CLARA.

You hear him.—Well, unless you soon decide,
You'll lose your opportunity—D'ye hear?

GUZMAN (*without*).

Let my attendants wait!

LAURA.

Who's that?

CLARA.

I'll open

The gate, and ascertain—

LAURA.

Oh no!—Stay, stay—

Well, if I must, I must—'tis all your doing.

(*Don Carlos, Laura and Maid go into the arbour.*)

CLARA.

So far we've made advance. Hark ye, Pedrillo!
Who's at the gate?

PEDRILLO.

I guess it is Don Guzman.

CLARA.

Then we've no business here—

(Goes into the summer house.)

PEDRILLO.

Here Flora! hasten—

Enter Clara's Maid.

Follow your lady into the summer house. *(Puts her in.)*

My wise Don Guzman! You're before your time—

I must get rid of you at all events,

And keep you off 'till the young folks are tack'd.

(Retires.)

Don Guzman (without).

GUZMAN.

Oons! the gate fast? That's not what I expected—

Oh ho! 'tis open.—*(Enters)*—What can all this mean?

A billet doux, fixing an assignation

With one who signs herself Incognita!

I've not of late been us'd to such appointments—

Pedrillo advances.

PEDRILLO.

Oh, my good lord! It's lucky I have found you!

GUZMAN.

You're Don Ramirez' valet, are you not ?

PEDRILLO.

I was, my lord—but I have turn'd him off.

GUZMAN.

How's that ?—You turn'd him off ?—What is't you mean ?

PEDRILLO.

Aye, my good lord. I bore him while I could,
But he became too bad for me at last ;
For I'm an honest lad, my lord, I have
A character to keep—

GUZMAN.

I'll take care of you.

I like your looks, you seem an honest fellow—

PEDRILLO.

You'll find I am so. Stay not here, my lord—
The wolf is ready to bear off your lamb.
I know it all.—My lord, that Mrs. Nunez—
You know she took his part before your lordship.

GUZMAN.

Well, what of her ?

PEDRILLO.

She has contriv'd it so,
That Donna Laura has agreed to marry—

GUZMAN.

Whom?

PEDRILLO.

Don Ramirez.

GUZMAN.

'Sdeath! it cannot be.

PEDRILLO.

He told me all the plot of it himself.
This very evening, she and Mrs. Nunez
Are to steal out, and meet Ramirez here.
This is a very noted place.

GUZMAN.

I'll steal 'em!

I'll teach 'em how to carry on their plots!
Ho!—Gasper! Gomez!—Thank you, honest friend—
Do you stay here to watch—I'll hasten home,
And catch 'em ere they're ready. *[Exit.]*

PEDRILLO.

He's dispos'd of!

Beatrice!—

[Enter Beatrice and Bertran.]

BEATRICE.

I'm here—Where is Ramirez plac'd?

PEDRILLO.

He's in yon summer-house. Where is Diego?

BEATRICE.

He's safe enough. The cook has him in charge.

He's hard at work with a cold pigeon pye.

PEDRILLO.

Now have we got the whole covey in our net,
Except the old cock bird—

[DON GUZMAN (*without*)—This way; scoundrels!]

And, as I live,

He comes—He seems in a most pelting passion.
Now, girl, bear up—the storm is at it's height.

*Enter Don Guzman, Don Alonzo, Cuchillo and Servants,
with torches.*

GUZMAN.

Don't talk to me of being calm and cool!
I tell you she is gone!—my girl is flown—
She's ruin'd—lost!—My family's dishonour'd!—
If I can meet the villain who seduc'd her—

ALONZO.

My lord, I'll follow him through all the world,
But he shall give you satisfaction.

GUZMAN.

Sir,

He shall. This old arm can do something yet.
(*Seeing Pedrillo*)—Oh, Lazarillo! What you said is true.

PEDRILLO.

I knew it was. She must be somewhere here.

CUCHILLO.

Had we not better search for the young lady?

GUZMAN.

We had—But where?—(*To Beatrice*)—Pray who are you, good dame?

BEATRICE.

Pray who am I, indeed!—Pray who are you?
What's here to do?—D'ye know I'm mistress here?

GUZMAN.

Oh ho! you know it all then, I suppose.

BEATRICE.

Know what?

GUZMAN.

My daughter—

BEATRICE.

I! I scorn your words!

I know your daughter!

GUZMAN.

Yes, you cockatrice!

Tell me directly where she is?

BEATRICE.

Not I!

PEDRILLO.

That summer-house perhaps—

GUZMAN.

Here it goes, faith!

Now we shall see.

(He kicks open the door of the summer-house.)

Oh! have I caught you, madam!

(He pulls out Clara veiled.)

I'll teach you how to run away again!

A pretty comrade you've selected too.

Come, sir, or I'll compel you to appear.

Enter Don Ramirez.

RAMIREZ.

My lord, I'm ready here to justify
What I have done.

GUZMAN.

I don't not your assurance.

But, sir—

RAMIREZ.

From you, my lord, I can bear much:

But know, my lord, this lady has seen through
Your flimsy artifice; she does me justice:
She has chosen me, my lord, as her protector;
Her faith is plighted to me, mine to her.

GUZMAN.

She plight her faith to such a one as thou!

RAMIREZ.

Things more improbable ere now have happen'd.
But, let her answer for herself. Speak, madam—

Is it not true that we have interchang'd
Our mutual faith?

CLARA.

It is most true indeed!

GUZMAN.

Why, you young reprobate—

RAMIREZ.

Obdurate still!

(*To Clara*) Let not his anger daunt you, madam.—Come,
Unite with me to move his flinty heart.
Cast off that envious veil—break forth at once
With all your dazzling charms.

CLARA.

Thus I obey!—(*Unveils.*)

RAMIREZ.

Confusion! Clara!

CLARA.

Yes, 'tis I, your Clara,

To whom your vows of constancy were pledg'd,
Who, when her unsuspecting heart confess'd
You its sole lord, was cruelly abandon'd,
And left to mourn her fond credulity.
Nay, turn not thus away—look on me, sir—

RAMIREZ.

I pray you spare me—I cannot look on you:
Your eyes, like basilisks, would pierce my brain,

And drive me to distraction!—Think no more
Of a lost wretch like me—Let me go hence,
And hide myself for ever from your presence!

GUZMAN.

So, so—here's a discovery! Don Ramirez
Contracted to my daughter's poor duenna!
Pray, Mrs. Nunez, do explain a little.

CLARA.

My lord, 'tis time that all disguise should end.
Grant me your pardon for a stratagem,
Devis'd at once to vindicate myself,
And save you and your daughter.

GUZMAN.

And pray, madam,
What is your real character?

CLARA.

My lord,
My family is not unknown to you.
You've heard of Don Henriquez de Mendoza?

GUZMAN.

I knew him well—my brother officer,
In the same regiment—

CLARA.

He was my father.

GUZMAN.

Your father?—I remember to have heard

He had a daughter, and her name was Clara.

CLARA.

I'm she.

GUZMAN.

Nay, then you are deserving of him.

Eh?—What is your opinion, Don Alonzo?

Master Cuchillo, what say you to it?

ALONZO.

This is a most surprising turn indeed.

CUCHILLO.

I never knew a clearer *alibi*!

But where is Donna Laura all this time?

GUZMAN.

Odso! that's true.—(To Beatrice) Where is my daughter, beldam?

BEATRICE.

You may come out, ma'am—Here she is, my lord.

Enter Donna Laura followed by Don Carlos.

GUZMAN.

Oh, you young baggage!—Hey!—Whom have we here?

What right have you, sir!—Who the deuce are you?

CARLOS.

My lord, your pardon, if I have presum'd
To aim at such perfection—

GUZMAN.

What's your name?

CARLOS.

Carlos, my lord; the eldest son of him
Who bears Medina's dukedom.

GUZMAN.

I'm your lordship's
Most humble servant! but I wish to know
How you became acquainted with my daughter.

CARLOS.

I saw her in the public walk, my lord,
And the first glance of her bewitching eye,
Made me her willing slave. I trac'd her home,
Wrote her fond letters, often pass'd the night
Beneath her windows; 'till, at length, my vows
Made an impression on her yielding heart.

GUZMAN.

My lord, no one can disapprove of you.
I'm flatter'd by your preference. (*To Laura*) Well, child,
What say you to his lordship?

LAURA.

Dear papa—
To ask that question when you found us here!

GUZMAN.

Ah! toad!—I understand you. (*To Carlos*) Well, my lord,
She's your's.

CARLOS (*kneeling to Laura*).

Thus let me sanction that blest word.

GUZMAN.

So—bless you both!—How fares it, Don Ramirez?
Come, cheer up, man! You've made a small mistake,
But you have better luck than you deserve.

RAMIREZ.

My lord, I own that I've deserv'd but little.
I'm overwhelm'd with shame, and know not how
To look that much wrong'd lady in the face.
If she can pardon me—

CLARA.

I've given a proof
I'm not inexorable—But for pardon,
I fear that I must ask for your forgiveness.
I've ta'en some freedoms with you, which perhaps
You may not readily excuse.

RAMIREZ.

With me?
Whate'er they are, I have deserv'd them all.

CLARA.

Call my first witness, Mrs. Nunez, here!
Won't she appear?—Why then I'll answer for her.
“Now, Mrs. Nunez, if you'll stand my friend,
“And try—”

RAMIREZ.

So, so; you then was the duenna?

And, sir, you may remember one Lucretia—
 I give you back your promise, sir; your children—
 Won't tax you heavily for their support.

When all are at confession, give me leave
 To lay aside my double character
 Of schoolmaster, and not'ry of Toledo.

PEDRILLO.

I've yet a longer catalogue of sins.
 (To Guzman)—I was your lordship's trusty Lazarillo—
 (To Ramires)—Your tailor, sir—and if your man Diego—

Enter Diego.

What! Pedro Lobo again!

PEDRILLO.

Aye, Pedro Lobo!

DIEGO.

I pray you make me room—I cannot stay.

PEDRILLO.

You need not be alarm'd—we're good friends now.
 You promis'd me to call and drink a glass.
 am not Pedro Lobo now.

DIEGO.

Art sure on't?

GUZMAN.

I see you've been too cunning for us all.

But that is past. You all shall home with me.

'Twill serve us as a merry jest.—(To Carlos)—My lord,
Take your bride's hand.—(To Clara)—For you, my
pretty plotter,

If you'll give your's to that repentant sinner—

RAMIREZ.

I hardly dare to sue for't—

CLARA.

Thus I give it.

But, should you feel inclin'd again to stray,

I mayn't so easily forgive you.

RAMIREZ.

No!

I am too conscious of my past offences,

Ever to hazard your displeasure more.

Each moment of my future life shall prove

How true I am to Clara, and to love!

END OF VOL. I.

AUG 29 1956